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28 MAY 1986

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

- Khomeyni Regime Continues Pressure on Armenian Schools
(ALIK, 11 Mar 86)..... 1

ARAB AFRICA

EGYPT

- Wafd, Muslim Brotherhood Differences Discussed
(ROSE AL-YUSUF, 17 Mar 86)..... 4
- Religious Scholars Discuss Aspects of Sedition
(AL-LIWA' AL-ISLAMI, 13 Mar 86)..... 7

SUDAN

- Importance of Al-Mahdi Family Discussed
(AL-TADAMUN, various dates)..... 12
- Pre-Election Issues Reviewed 12
- Dispute in Ummah Party Discussed, Wali-al-Din
al-Hadi al-Mahdi Interview 14
- Family's Worries Called Political, Ahmad al-Mahdi Interview 22

TUNISIA

- Upcoming Power Struggle Predicted, Trends Watched
(AL-MAJALLAH, 26 Mar-1 Apr 86)..... 34

Various Opposition Movements Listed, Discussed (AL-ANWAR AL-TUNISIYAH, 16 Mar 86).....	39
Commercial Importance of Ports Examined (Hedi Loumi; DIALOGUE, 7 Apr 86).....	42
ARAB EAST/ISRAEL	
ISRAEL	
Battle Over Hebron's Beyt Hadassa Reviewed (Pinhas 'Anbery; 'AL HAMISHMAR, 14 Mar 86).....	47
IDF Encourages Evangelism; Political Slant Noted (Yoram Yarqoni; HA'ARETZ, 14 Mar 86).....	52
JORDAN	
Regional Economic Role Reviewed by Chambers Chairman (Hamdi al-Tabba' Interview; AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A-'MAL, Mar 86).....	60
SOUTH ASIA	
AFGHANISTAN	
Soviet, Afghan Forces Attack Strongholds in Paktia Province (KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL, 12, 17 Apr 86).....	65
Heavy Fighting Reported	65
Casualties Heavy on Both Sides	66
BANGLADESH	
Paper Reports Requirements for Nomination Scrutinizers (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 4 Apr 86).....	67
Correspondent Interviews Shaykh Hasina (Sheikh H. Wajed Interview; THE TELEGRAPH, 6 Apr 86).....	69
Papers Report Shaykh Hasina's 4 April Speech (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 5 Apr 86).....	72
Government's Responsibilities Noted	72
More Details on Speech	73
Shaykh Hasina Addresses Candidates for Nomination (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 5 Apr 86).....	75
Jatiya Janata Not To Participate in Polls (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 4 Apr 86).....	76

Bangladesh Workers Return From Saudi Prisons (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 5 Apr 86).....	77
Briefs	
Accord With Canada	79
Border Talks End	79
INDIA	
Minister Regrets Nonimplementation of NAM Programs (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 8 Apr 86).....	80
Nonaligned Meeting Discusses Action Program, Other Matters (G.K. Reddy; THE HINDU, 11 Apr 86).....	81
Minister Speaks on Defense Purchase, Cooperation Policy (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 8 Apr 86).....	83
Press Reports Discussion of Stand on Sri Lanka (THE STATESMAN, THE HINDU, 10 Apr 86).....	84
Bhagat Remarks in Lok Sabha	84
Peace keeping Forces Not Favored	85
HINDU Analyst Comments	85
Farooq Abdullah Expects Kashmir Polls in October (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 8 Apr 86).....	87
Letter Received From Indian Prisoner in Pakistan Jail (THE HINDU, 29 Mar 86).....	88
IRAN	
Libyan Official Gives Views on American 'Aggression' ('Abdollah A. Fazel Interview; KEYHAN, 27 Mar 86).....	89
Briefs	
Reclaimable Lands Bestowed on Oppressed	93
PAKISTAN	
Shift in Benazir's Attitude to United States Welcomed (Abdul Karim Abid; JASARAT, 31 Mar 86).....	94
Editorial Blasts Suggestion To Change Country's Name (JASARAT, 29 Mar 86).....	97
Strong Action Demanded To Bring Law, Order (Editorial; JASARAT, 25 Mar 86).....	99
Center, Akali Governments Charged With Incompetence (Editorial; JANSATTA, 31 Mar 86).....	101

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

KHOMAYNI REGIME CONTINUES PRESSURE ON ARMENIAN SCHOOLS

Tehran ALIK in Armenian 11 Mar 86 p 2

[Excerpts] [Editor's note:] In our 5 March 1986 edition we carried a report about the 46th session of the Delegates' Assembly of the Armenian Diocese of Tehran. We report below the details of that meeting.

The Delegates' Council of the Armenian Diocese of Tehran consists of 54 members, 7 of whom are representatives of the spiritual domain. Of the temporal delegates, 38 are elected representatives from Tehran and the remaining 9 represent other regions.

The 46th session began at 4:20 pm on 4 March 1986. Present at the meeting were 38 voting members and 3 consultative members.

After prayers, Archbishop Ardak Manukian, [Prelate of the Armenian Diocese of Tehran], opened the session stating that the convening of this meeting is a heartening and joyful event because, although the term of this assembly has already expired, the representatives of the people, being conscious of their duties, have remained at their posts and continue to perform their functions as delegates in accordance with the rules of the diocese until government approval is obtained for new elections .

The Holy Father also congratulated the Diocesan Council which has been carrying on its work for the sixth consecutive year, running the business of the diocese with the help of its subsidiary bodies, even though the issue of elections has been repeatedly deferred.

The Diocesan Council report was read by Council Chairman L. Aharonian who first thanked the Holy Father and stated that the council has received a letter signed by the Islamic Guidance Ministry's cultural affairs counselor Sabah Zangane and addressed to the Holy Father. The letter is numbered 2.9230 and dated 13 February 1986.

In response to the council's letters numbered 313.2560 (31 December 1985) and 313.2492 (21 December 1985), which were addressed to the three members of the commission assigned to resolve the Armenian schools' problems by the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, the ministry states that the issue has been raised at a meeting of the "representatives of pertinent centers" and that the following points are universally mandatory for Armenian schools:

1) In accordance with Article 15 of the Constitution and following the confirmation of the Ministry of Education and Training, religion classes must be taught in Farsi.

2) The teaching of Armenian literature must receive the approval of the Ministry of Education and Training and such teaching must take place in hours which do not conflict with the official class hours of the Ministry of Education and Training.

3) The presence of teaching affairs officials and Moslem principals is mandatory in schools to insure compliance with communiques and coordination in extracurricular activities and to remain away from Islamic propaganda. Incidentally, the formation of a "teachers' council" is under way, and an Armenian teacher will take part in it.

4) Activities involving the use of the school outside official hours will need the approval of the Religious Minority School Affairs Commission.

5) According to the general communiques of the Ministry of Education and Article (v) of the Minority School Affairs Commission's regulations the use of hejab [veil] in minority schools is mandatory in accordance with the principles of public tradition, customs and respect for rights.

6) Compliance with previously issued regulations, decisions and instructions related to schools is mandatory, and in that regard it is essential to maintain the necessary coordination with the Religious Minority Affairs Commission which was established by the Honorable Prime Minister.

After reading the entire letter, Mr Aharonian stated that the Diocesan Council reviewed this letter carefully, convened a meeting of the educational commission and formulated a letter of response. In its letter the council stated that the demands of the Armenian community have been ignored and reiterated the proposal put forward jointly by the three dioceses which will be submitted to the members of Supreme Council on Cultural Revolution. Mr Aharonian later said that after carrying out this work the council found it appropriate to make the letter the property of our people through the Delegates' Assembly.

The Diocesan Council Chairman also expressed deep gratitude to Mr V. Vartanian for his diligent work in connection with the Armenian schools issue.

The second part of Mr Aharonian's report was about religious, educational, cultural and athletic events. He said that at the request of the Ministry of Islamic Guidance we must notify the ministry's Religious Minority Affairs Department about all planned events through representatives appointed by us and that we must receive the ministry's approval before we proceed with any planned activities.

In the third part of his report, Mr Aharonian dwelled on the issue of new elections for the Delegates' Assembly and explained that the Diocesan Council has contacted the Ministry of Interior again and that the issue is being pursued. He said that the election commission will begin work and organize new elections as soon as the ministry's approval is obtained.

After the Diocesan Council report was read, Madat Shamalian, Edvard Yeritsian, Dr Jirayr Garabedian and Krish Davidian delivered speeches.

Mr Shamalian asked the Diocesan Council to obtain a written agreement regarding the Delegates' Assembly elections during its negotiations with the Ministry of the Interior.

Mr Davidian said that had he known about the [Education Ministry's] letter sooner he would have asked the Diocesan Council and the Holy Father to return the letter because it insults the Armenian nation.

Mr Aharonian explained that the body supervising religious minority schools operates under the jurisdiction of the minister and it appears that no Armenian or representative of Armenian schools takes part in that body.

9588

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EGYPT

WAFD, MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD DIFFERENCES DISCUSSED

Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 17 Mar 86 pp 20-21

[Text] A few days ago Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il announced that he was joining the Liberal Party, and he was appointed vice-chairman of the party. This joining raised many questions: Does it mean that the Muslim Brotherhood is leaving the Wafd party and allying themselves with the Liberal Party? Has the Liberal Party gotten the chance to call upon those with Islamic tendencies to join, and thus have a presence in the political arena? Is it a new attempt by the Brotherhood following the failure of its attempt to take control of the Ummah party? And is it true, as AL-AHRAR newspaper stated, that seven members of the Wafd party are on their way to the Liberal Party?

Seven on the Way!

It is obvious that most members of the Liberal Party welcomed Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il's coming and his filling the post of vice-chairman of the party, which had been vacant.

The party spokesman, 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Shurbaji said:

"Salah Abu Isma'il's presence within the Liberal Party is natural for a citizen who believes in God and His prophets and who calls for the application of Islamic law, for as our program stipulates, there is no way out for the nation but to apply Islamic law, and his joining does not mean an alliance.

"When the party was first proclaimed we submitted a bill to abolish usurious interest through Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il, who was an independent at that time. The Liberal is the only party that is still demanding that Islamic law be applied, at a time when what the other parties are saying contradicts what they do. The National party has the power to bring out 13 bills that are in fact in the halls of the current assembly, stumbling between the office of the assembly president and the proposals committee and the legislative committee. As for the Wafd Party, which assumes the leadership of the opposition, if it were serious about applying Islamic law, it would have done so before the revolution, especially since it was in power for about half a century. The programs of other parties make it clear that they do not wish to apply the law of God. With all due respect to them, they are not dealing with the application of Islamic law, rather they make their identity known through what

we see in their programs. We call upon everyone who believes that the application of Islamic law is a question of duty to join the party, and we expect that other deputies, and more than seven members of the assembly, will join the Liberal Party!!

Why?!

Why did Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il join the Liberal Party, and does he aspire to the chairmanship of the party?

Salah Abu Isma'il said:

"I joined the Liberal Party because the current law require that a deputy belong to a party. You have seen that I agree with the program of the Liberal Party, and we agree that if God has authority over an issue, there are no private opinions regarding the text, and if there is room for private opinions we work hard at the issues in the spirit of Islam.

"I used to be the link between the Brotherhood and the Wafd. I brought in the governortes from the furthest south to the furthest north. We gathered in deputies for the Wafd when it was first formed, and we continued in it when it became acquiescent, then when it resumed again, until the Wafd expelled me because somebody asked me, 'What would your position be if party practice conflicted with Islamic practice?' My answer naturally was, 'Then I would take off the party cloak.' Strangely, the Wafd leadership convened a meeting of the higher council but did not invite me though I was a member of it, and they said that I had resigned, and they decided to accept my resignation without my having submitted it.

"I could have fought for my being in the party, but I preferred to stay away from people who had lied about me and broken promises.

"I was welcomed by the Liberal Party, and the general secretariat was unanimous in appointing me as vice-chairman, and I hope that after my joining and after I have cooperated with them that its fruits will extend to our Muslim Brotherhood."

He Speaks for Himself Only!

When a source stated that the Brotherhood was in sharp conflict with the Wafd and was looking for another party, Yasim Siraj-al-Din, a member of the parliamentary body of the Wafd party, announced that there was no conflict whatsoever between the seven members of the Wafd party in the People's Assembly and the Wafd, "and we do not expect there to be in the future. It would not be reasonable for the Brotherhood to exercise its representative duties through a party of less importance and popularity than the Wafd party. I do not expect that the Brotherhood will leave the Wafd because there is no conflict between them and Wafd policy, and there is no disagreement over applying Islamic law. On the contrary, we ask that Muslim Brotherhood members of the assembly submit whatever bills they like on the applicatton of Islamic law."

Jabir Rizq, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood society and its press spokesman, said:

"Umar al-Talmasani, the president of the society, has previously stated that Salah Abu Isma'il speaks for himself only, and so far there has been no conflict between the Wafd and the Brotherhood, and we are happy that the Liberal Party is calling for the application of Islamic law."

The upshot is: Will the Wafd and Liberal parties have a struggle over trying to please the Muslim Brotherhood? Or is it an individual attempt to bring Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il back into the political arena?

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EGYPT

RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS DISCUSS ASPECTS OF SEDITION

Cairo AL-LIWA' AL-ISLAMI in Arabic 13 Mar 86 p 3

[Article: "Islamic Society: Why Is It Being Subjected to Sedition and Conspiracies?"]

[Text] Ever since the first day of the Call, Muslims have been subjected to sedition and conspiracies, some of which emanate from within society itself while some are from the outside. Some of them are as dark as night and others are like a passing summer cloud. Some have ideological significance and others have political and social significance.

Why are Muslims being subjected to sedition? Why is Islamic society more susceptible to conspiracies and pressure?

The 'ulamas have emphasized that the love of this world and the desire to lead and rule allows the head of sedition to loom always upon society and that a large number of seditionists do so in order to escape legal costs and to shirk their responsibilities. In the meantime, the enemies of Islam abroad are always adding fuel to the fire.

Sedition in general is deviation from God's path and instigation of conflict and discord among the Islamic community.

This is how Dr 'Abd-al-Ghani al-Rajih, well-known professor of Koranic interpretation at al-Azhar University, summed up the meaning of sedition.

His eminence explains sedition as having a special meaning and a general meaning.

Sedition, in the special sense, lies in the soul of the believer when tempted by the devil and in his worldly possessions when he is blinded, tempted, and corrupted by them, by children, and by the mind or any other blessings God bestows upon mankind!

Hence, we see that the problem of the human race is that it is a master at taking advantage of such grace while forgetting the benefactor, namely God!

As for sedition in the general sense, it is described by 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab as "that which ripples like the waves of the sea among people," or that which invites Muslims to seek mastery over parties, groups, and factions, each one striving for his own desires and all are misguided! However, not every new call, controversial that it may be, can be called sedition.

Dr 'Abd-al-Ghani al-Rajihi says that virtuous calls are major reform movements needed by the individual and society alike. Hence, the Prophet was right when he said something to the effect that every 100 years a new Muslim reformist emerges.

Hence, we are in dire need of reformists, even if they rouse the forces of evil, uncritical faith, and injustice because calls for reform are always met with rejection and distortion by those who seek sedition.

But sedition is aimed at evil, be it by striking at the unity of Islamic society by distorting its ideology, by impeding its interests, by rebelling against the Muslim ruler, or by resisting reform and the call for the application of God's law.

Sedition always emerges as a counter-movement against the current of righteousness. That is why the Koran described sedition as worse than murder because it incites the community, creates conflicts within society, impedes the forces of work and development, and hampers the calls for reform aimed at the application of God's law.

In short, it will lead to failure. The Koran says: "Fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart." The prophetic tradition says: "Sedition is sleep, cursed is he who awakens it."

But sedition always has leaders and followers and is always awakened as the prophetic tradition said!

The question remains: What are the motives of sedition in society and why is Islamic society more susceptible than others to attempts at discord, conflict, obstruction of work and progress, and the application of God's law?

The primary reason, according to Dr al-Husayni Hashim, well-known professor of Prophetic tradition and vice-rector of al-Azhar, is the temptations of evil and the devil nestled in the minds of those who "awaken" sedition.

Such temptations...and this devil are what move the forces of evil and hypocrisy...and what gives love for this world, money, and lust concrete form, thus affecting the seditionists. Indeed, it makes them forget that, as Muslims, they are required to apply God's law and as human beings they are required to apply God's law and as human beings they are required to follow the path of God.

We notice in the Koran that the devil took upon himself something of a pledge to tempt man. The Koran quotes the devil as saying: "I will lie in

wait for them on thy straight way." It is as though he was pledging to stand against every call for reform and with every call for sedition! The Koran says in Surah (Hijr) about the devil's ways of temptation: "O my Lord! Because thou has put me in the wrong, I will make wrong fair-seeming to them on the earth and I will put them all in the wrong."

God also says in Surah "S" (i.e., the Arabic letter "Sad")]: "Then by thy power I will put them all in the wrong."

Perhaps the devil's actions create a society that tolerates hypocrites, seditionists, and malevolents in Islamic society.

Dr Ahmad Shalabi says that hypocrites can be found at all times and in all ages. Every age has its own hypocrites. But one fact I would like to emphasize is that the nature of hypocrites is that they do not come into view unless their enemy is stronger than they are. Hence, there were no hypocrites at the beginning of the Islamic Call. No sooner did the Islamic state gather strength than hypocrites emerged from all sides! At any rate, an environment of hypocrisy is the hotbed of sedition, and sedition is aroused by the devil and love of this world. "If any take the Evil One for their intimate, what a dreadful intimate he is!"

Dr Muhammad al-Sayyid Tantqwi, dean of the Arab and Islamic Studies College at al-Azhar University, puts his finger on the most important reasons some use for inciting sedition, namely "to forfeit religious obligations and to shirk responsibility."

His eminence illucidates by saying that most seditionists in the Prophet's era did not want to uphold legal obligations and Koranic instructions. This was evident in the general reaction of the Qurayshis at the beginning of the Call in Muslim dissension in the Bani al-Mustalaq raid and in the so-called apostasy whose goal was to eliminate the alms tax! It was evident as well with respect to those who claim prophecy such as Musaylimah the liar and Sajah who married Musaylimah!

Indeed, the human devils' wish to get rid of legal obligations explains the secret of the emergence of scores of seditious calls such as the Karamathian, the Masonic, the Bahai and others.

On the other hand, seditionists often seek to shirk their responsibilities and tend to weasel out of important roles they are required to play in society! Such actions assume the form of rebellion against the faith at time, against the law at other times, and against the public and private interests of the people at certain times, notwithstanding that believers are required to bear responsibility and to work and do good. God said: "If you do something, do it well."

The Prophetic tradition says: "All deeds must be righteous." The famous words of Gabriel explain this as "charity means that you worship God as if you see Him, and if you cannot see Him, He can see you."

Furthermore, the Koran calls upon human conscience to work and bear responsibility. God said: "Work: God will soon observe your work, and His Apostle and the believers," and "Then will ye be sent back to the Knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you the truth of the things that ye did!"

Hence, work and responsibility are major Islamic necessities as well as requisites of life.

Dr 'Abd-al-Sabur Shahin, well-known propagandist and Cairo University professor, attributes Islamic society's vulnerability to sedition to several reasons, including:

Islamic society is a target by its very nature because it is one that has a distinctive ideological character and a lofty human message. Therefore, the forces of oppression and injustice do not want Muslims to get sedition out of their mind because they are afraid of them and fear their movement!

A look at many instances of sedition brought upon Muslims reveals the presence of hidden hands trifling with the Islamic entity. That is why the identification of foreign forces who harbor ill will towards the Muslims is a clear factor in our explanation of sedition!

On the other hand, the weakness of the faith at certain periods has aroused national jingoism which in turn has provoked destructive separatist and Shu'ubi movements.

Add to that the "personal ambition" of the leaders of seditious movements. We find that, in the old days, those who claimed prophecy wanted leadership and hypocrites wanted leadership and everyone wanted to achieve personal gains!

Dr Shahin adds another explanation to the aforementioned reason: love of this world. Love of this life makes seditionists forget the gravity of their action because they only evoke the joy of disobedience in disregard for the gravity of the crime!

The Prophetic tradition says: "This world is green and beautiful and God has made you its heirs and He watches what you do, so guard yourselves against this world and against women for the first instance of sedition by the children of Israel was caused by women."

Perhaps this explains the fact that behind many of the calls to sedition, be it political, ideological or social, was a woman!

Love of this world is what makes individuals and groups rebel against Islam and the Muslims and makes them give power to falsehood over truth. The Koran relates such a situation by saying: "But say not--for any false thing--that your tongues may put forth, 'this is lawful, and this is forbidden'--coveting the perishable goods of this life!"

His Eminence Shaykh 'Awadallah Hijazi, former president of al-Azhar University, points to another reason that renders Islamic society more susceptible to sedition. He says that man and communities, unheedful of time, forget the Day of Reckoning, and are oblivious to the fact that God will judge all seditionists and evildoers and all those who oppose the truth and support falsehood and oppression. Hence, we find that belief in the Day of Reckoning is one of the pillars of Islamic structure in general and Islamic society in particular.

Let us read what the Koran says about the Day of Reckoning: "Yea, to God belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, so that He rewards those who do evil, according to their deeds, and He rewards those who do good, with what is best; Do those who seek after evil ways think that we shall hold them equal with those who believe and do righteous deeds--will their life and their death be equal? Ill is the judgment that they make. God created the heavens and the earth for just ends, in order that each soul may find the recompense of what it has earned, and none of them be wronged; that day every soul will be requited for what it earned; no injustice will there be that day, for God is swift in taking account" And it says: "We shall set up scales of justice for the day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least and if there is no more than the weight of a mustard seed, we will bring it to account and we are enough to take account."

The Koran portrays the entire human race in two categories: "Those who are wretched shall be in the fire: there will be for them therein nothing, but the heaving of sighs and sobs. They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord willeth: for the Lord is the sure Accomplisher of what He planneth. And those who are blessed shall be in the garden: they will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord willeth: a gift without break." Surah Hud.

12502/9190

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SUDAN

IMPORTANCE OF AL-MAHDI FAMILY DISCUSSED

Pre-Election Issues Reviewed

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 29 Mar-4 Apr 86 p 19

[Article: "Political Activity in Sudan on the Eve of the Elections; the Worries of al-Mahdi Family"]

[Text] As the campaign for Sudan's parliamentary elections heats up with each passing day, the level of political activity in Sudan rises and falls in a manner rarely seen in a Third World country.

Most of the candidates who are campaigning in the elections are political figures who have been involved in past political activity. In fact, some of them remained involved in politics throughout the period during which Sudan was ruled by one party (from 1969 until the overthrow of former president Ja'far Numayri's regime).

As a result of family or sectarian ties the new elections campaign seems to be a family affair. The attention of Sudanese citizens seems to be focused on the conditions of the al-Mahdi family and on the controversies brewing among some of its leaders. In fact, it may be said that Arabs are quite preoccupied with these matters; they are watching developments in Sudan with interest. Although the worries of the al-Mahdi family have caught the Arabs' attention, it must be noted that the intricacies and complexities of other people's worries are not less than those of the al-Mahdi family. We are referring specifically to the worries of those who support a federation and to the worries of Muslim Brothers and communists.

That is why AL-TADAMUN thought it should review what was on the minds of the Sudanese people on the eve of the elections. AL-TADAMUN thought it should begin by reviewing the worries of the most vital political family: the al-Mahdi family. AL-TADAMUN has found that the best format for presenting this family's worries would be that of interviews with representatives of that family who are, according to their importance, their political experience and their prestige within the family, the following:

--Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi is a man who is more popular within the family and more dynamic among al-Ansar. He is more skillful in political tactics and more prominent at political, international and Arab gatherings.

--Ahmad al-Mahdi is a man who is qualified for more than one objective reason to resolve the conflict between al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's supporters and al-Ansar, who feel it is their duty to commemorate Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi by showing their loyalty to his heir, Wali-al-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi. But it must be taken into account that the support of al-Hadi al-Mahdi's third son, Nasr-al-Din al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, has toned down the conflict. Also, the implicit support of al-Hadi al-Mahdi's other son, al-Fadil al-Mahdi, constitutes a noticeable contribution to the effort to tone down the aforementioned conflict.

This is due to the fact that Ahmad al-Mahdi is regarded as the family's patriarch. In the traditions and rituals of political families, particularly in Sudan, that position carries with it privileges which are implied in the emotions and sentiments of members of the sect to which the family belongs. In addition, Ahmad al-Mahdi also represents his sister, Fatmah, who is married to Dr Sharif al-Tuhami. Ahmad al-Mahdi also represents other prestigious family members whose importance is not diminished by the fact that they stay in the background.

--Wali-al-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi has been lost in the confusion of the controversies that intensified after the death of his father. His bewilderment stems from the fact that he refuses to yield to any principle other than that of inheriting the leadership position. On that basis he feels that the best gesture al-Ansar could make to commemorate their imam, who was killed by the previous regime, is to adopt the principle of fairness regarding the sect's leadership. He would thus become the sect's religious leader while the political leadership position would go to his cousin, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi.

The worries of the al-Mahdi family are real, and their complexities are not reduced when family members or representatives try to make light of them when they are interviewed.

There is one major question and this is it: Had there been no differences and had the al-Mahdi family been united and standing together under one political and religious leader, would there have been a debate about the leader of that family assuming the leadership of Sudan?

There are those who think that the family is large enough to have no more than a share of Sudan's leadership positions. Accordingly, differences and conflicts within the family are not the reasons that are keeping the al-Mahdi family from establishing full power over Sudan.

There is a second question and this is it: If the al-Ansar sect has failed to achieve a parliamentary majority from the time political activity for independence began till 1969, will the sect be able to achieve that now?

There is a third question which appears to complement the second. If members of the al-Ansar sect failed to achieve that majority in the past when they were united, will they be able to achieve it when they have three factions within their sect?

Raising these questions seems gratuitous as we set forth the worries of the al-Mahdi family in three interviews we conducted with Ahmad al-Mahdi, al-Sadiq

al-Mahdi and Wali-al-Din al-Mahdi. We are also presenting the testimony of a British subject who witnessed the disputes of this old political family. AL-TADAMUN chose that witness, who is Graham Thomas and a family friend, because we thought he would be an unbiased judge of the story of this political family.

Dispute in Ummah Party Discussed

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 29 Mar-4 Apr 86 pp 22-24

[Interview with Wali-al-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi, leader of the Ummah Party, by Fath-al-Rahman Mahjub, in Khartoum: "Our Differences Are Reflected on the al-Mahdi Family and on al-Ansar, but the Elections Will Settle the Matter"]

[Text] "One must be qualified to assume the position of imam; that position is not inherited. Religion and politics are inseparable."

"We will not attack anyone because his ideas are different from ours, but we will respond if attacked."

"The roots of the conflict within the Ummah Party go back to before May 1969; it is a religious and a political conflict."

Mr Wali-al-Din al-Mahdi, the son of Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi, is a 38-year old man --he was born on 20 October 1947--who studied political science and social studies at the University of Hull in Great Britain.

He began his career in public service in 1968 during the election campaign for Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi. His political activities and responsibilities then evolved within the al-Ansar sect and the Ummah Party. He represented Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi in actions and coordinating efforts with al-Sharif Husayn al-Hindi. In that context, the two men met with Emperor Haile Selassie and King Faysal to explain the imam's view then and to ask them as friends to assist in alleviating the ongoing political tension, which was the result of the May 1969 coup and the pressures to which al-Ansar, led by Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi, were being subjected, particularly on Aba Island.

Afterwards Wali-al-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi concentrated his activities on organizing the resistance from outside the country. He called upon people to emigrate from Sudan so they can receive training in the use of weapons and save the country. After returning to Sudan last year he took over the leadership of the Ummah Party--supporters of Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi--and he is still the leader of that party.

[Question] Do you think that the conflict between you and Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and his group is deep-seated and that its reasons go back in history, or is it due to present considerations?

[Answer] The conflict within the Ummah Party naturally antedates May 1969. Originally, it was a conflict between Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi and Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, and the reasons for it, which were religious and political, were due to Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's secular ideas and his appeal to the imam to relinquish

politics. Although Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi had religious as well as political ties to Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi, he violated all his obligations to the imam and renounced his religious and political ties to him. It was during that period that there was a split within the Ummah Party between al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's faction and the imam's faction. The details of that split and the reasons for it are well-known historically. We do not think these are the reasons for the current conflict.

[Question] Why do you reject al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's appeal to the imam to renounce politics?

[Answer] Islam does not say anything about that. According to the Koran and the Prophetic Tradition, the imam is responsible for the people's religious and worldly affairs. This was true in the days of God's messenger, may God bless him and grant him salvation; it was true in the days of the orthodox caliphs; and it was true in the days of Imam al-Mahdi too. In other words, religion and politics are joined together in one framework. In this regard, Muslims are unlike Christians for whom religion and the state are separate. The separation of religion from the state happened in Europe. But Islam is a system that concerns itself with people's religious and worldly affairs and with their daily lives as well. This may be one of the reasons for the conflict which is taking place at the present time between us and Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi.

[Question] What specifically are the differences between you and al-Sadiq al-Mahdi?

[Answer] The difference between us is religious, and it has to do with doctrinal affairs and the religious leadership of al-Ansar. It is also a political difference that has to do with the secular issue and ideas that have nothing to do with ideas espoused by the Ummah Party, as, for example, the alliance with the communists. The religious difference has to do with a need to modernize Islam where such modernization is unnecessary but is being sought to achieve the secular formula for which Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has become known. Through that formula al-Sadiq al-Mahdi is trying to make changes, alterations and renovations where none is needed. We believe that the nation of Islam at this late date can prosper only by what enabled the early Muslims to prosper. Islam is an integrated religion that requires no renovation or modernization. Of course, people's circumstances are different, and each society and each stage has its own circumstances, but these matters are taken into account without distorting the Koran and without introducing radical changes in Islamic laws.

Our political differences revolve around the absence of democracy and consultation in the party. We believe that all the party's affairs should be based on consultation and democracy. There are specific principles governing the course of political affairs for the Ummah Party and the course of religious affairs for al-Ansar. We believe that the legacy of Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's group includes looking forward to having a one-party system. It is true that we are now in a democratic age, but one can still find such hidden tendencies.

[Question] Ahmad al-Mahdi is also seeking the leadership position for himself and his group. What is your attitude toward him?

[Answer] The nature of Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi's relationship with the bygone regime is well-known. But we have no quarrel with him since he has accepted our position as the Ummah Party, the supporters of Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi. We have no quarrel with Ahmad al-Mahdi as long as he adheres to our principles and to his declaration of loyalty to Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi, and as long as he accepts everything we set forth on the political scene. We also expect him to denounce and condemn everything that happened under the previous regime. Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi and his group did in fact get in touch with us, and they indicated that they wished to join our organization and accept our slogans and our principles which are set forth by the Ummah Party, the supporters of the imam, under my leadership. We do not expect any conflict with Ahmad al-Mahdi because, as a party, we will achieve a formula that will be acceptable to everyone. We may, for example, have a leadership council rather than one leader to manage the affairs of al-Ansar and the Ummah Party. For example, we may form a secretariat of three or four individuals who would serve on that leadership council and would have veto power. I would continue to serve as president of the party, but as far as the imamate is concerned, we would all continue to abide by our declaration of loyalty to Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi.

[Question] The conflict between you has grown in different directions, and that is manifested in the declaration each one of you made to his political party. Do you think that this is still a conflict among the leaders or has it spread to the general membership in al-Ansar and in the Ummah Party? If it has spread to the general membership, how has that conflict affected them?

[Answer] I think that the conflict exists between the leaders and among the general membership as well and that it has affected the al-Mahdi family and al-Ansar as well. But what is important in our opinion is the base of support, that is, al-Ansar, because they represent the majority. The leaders, however, are a minority. We believe that the vast majority of al-Ansar are still loyal to Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi. The people's faith in their imam and their strong determination and commitment to him as well as their ties to him were not diminished in the past 16 years of Numayri's administration. In fact, they may have been strengthened. This is because the experience people had during that period strengthened and tested them and showed them who was pure. It turned out that the majority were pure, and they are the ones who remained loyal to the imam. But those who departed from the imam's way are those who do not follow the doctrine and who did not abide by their loyalty to the imam. The holy verse from the Koran states: "They are those who, on being told: 'Your enemy has mustered a great force against you: fear them,' grew more tenacious in their faith and replied: 'Allah's help is all-sufficient for us. He is the best Protector'" (Al-'Imran: 173).

Those people were the followers of the imam. Like their illustrious predecessors, the followers of al-Mahdi, they remained steadfast and patient and they persevered despite all the harrassment, persecution and torture they endured at the hands of the bygone regime.

The next elections will settle the matter. On our part we can say that al-Ansar are on our side; they are committed to Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi. The other party, however, Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's group, stated that I and Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi represent no more than two percent of al-Ansar. This is not an objective

statement. Before their conflict with Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi that group used to say that the imam had only seven supporters. But then despite the meager resources available to him, Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi managed to defeat their political office in its entirety in the 1968 elections. And now, despite our meager resources, we will run in the elections, and we will prove to the Sudanese people and the whole world that we are committed to the imam and that we are still loyal to him and to our doctrine. Our purpose is to reform our country and firmly establish the laws of Muhammad as the foundation for government in Sudan.

[Question] Hasn't this conflict and division produced some kind of bewilderment or confusion among al-Ansar or within the circles of the Ummah Party's traditional bases of support?

[Answer] Some people became bewildered, but the vast majority remained committed. They continue to get in touch with us and to send us their representatives and their committees. Together, we think about every minor and major matter. On our part we explain our position to them, and we send them statements and the party's program, which was written at the party's conference on Aba Island during last year's Great Bairam. It was at that conference that the party's program was approved, and the political office was charged with the task of electing other party officials. The conference was attended by a large number of al-Ansar's leaders and officials from all over Sudan. Furthermore, the travels of party leaders served the important purpose of affirming and explaining our position and denying many rumors that were being circulated in the country. There was one rumor in particular about reconciliation between us, the Ummah Party, those who support the imam, and the New National Ummah Party, which is headed by Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi. This is nothing more than a rumor that followers of Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi concocted.

[Question] What are the possibilities for reconciliation and restoration of harmony?

[Answer] There can be no reconciliation unless it is achieved in accordance with specific conditions and principles. It would be good if we could agree on these conditions and principles. We are not closing any doors. But if we do not agree on those specific conditions and principles, there will be no reconciliation because the difference between us is one over doctrines and ideas, and the gap is wide and can only be reconciled by an agreement on these matters.

[Question] The imamate is one of these matters, is it not?

[Answer] The matter of the imamate is of interest to all members of al-Ansar and to the al-Mahdi family as well. Al-Ansar are more concerned about their commitment to the imam and their adherence to that position because they consider it a spiritual bond they have had since the days of the prophet, may God bless him and grant him salvation. A verse from al-Fath [Victory] chapter of the Koran states: "Those that swear fealty to you swear fealty to Allah Himself. The Hand of Allah is above their hands. He that breaks his oath breaks it at his own peril, but he that keeps his pledge to Allah shall be richly rewarded" [10].

One's loyalty is not pledged to a person; it is rather pledged to God. One maintains his commitment to that pledge as long as that pledge was made voluntarily and not under oppression as was the case during Numayri's administration. In those days people were terrorized and forced to pledge their loyalty to Numayri. However, the pledge of loyalty to Imam al-Hadi and his predecessors was made voluntarily. And even in the days of Imam al-Mahdi, when there was a revolution, no one was coerced into pledging his loyalty to Imam al-Mahdi. Evidence for this lies in the fact that al-Mahdi's army was divided into two sections. In one section there were al-Mahdi's followers who had dedicated themselves to the cause of God and country and had given up everything for that cause, receiving no financial reward for their efforts. And there were those who fought for the cause of God, al-Jihadiyah, as members of the regular army. Those people received salaries, and non-Muslims served with them.

[Question] What do you think about the incidents at Kurmuk during which, it's being said, al-Hadi al-Mahdi was killed?

[Answer] There is considerable mystery concerning the matter of Imam al-Hadi. So far, no one seems to have the evidence that could prove what happened during the incidents in Kurmuk, as reported by Ja'far Numayri and the media in the past administration. We do not reject what God has decreed, but we want material evidence of what happened. This is because what God has decreed has legal consequences and involves a pledge of loyalty which all members of al-Ansar made and are committed to. Until matters become clear and facts are confirmed to us, people will remain committed to their pledge to Imam al-Hadi. When the facts are confirmed, al-Ansar, as a group, will determine what has to be done.

In that context there are pending issues. There is the issue of al-Ansar in (Wad Nubawi) and on Aba Island where there was bloodshed. The matter of Imam al-Hadi himself is a basic issue; it is neither a family nor an emotional issue, as was alleged in the past. We believe that this issue is one that concerns not only the Sudanese people, but also all Muslims in the Islamic world.

[Question] What efforts did you make to deal with these issues that you say are still pending?

[Answer] After the revolution last April we believed that these would be the issues to which the state would give fundamental attention. We thought the state would place priority on the aggression that was carried out by the bygone regime on Aba Island and (Wad Nubawi). We thought that priority would be given to the bloodshed that had occurred and the lives that were lost during the previous period. We thought this issue would be given priority over all other issues except that of saving Sudan from economic disaster, desertification and the drought. We believed that issue would be given priority, for example, over the issue of the Falashas' departure to Israel. But we've learned that many agencies did not give these issues the attention they should have given them.

We came back to Sudan some time after the success of the uprising because we wanted to assure ourselves that it did in fact represent the Sudanese people and that the army was in fact on the people's side. When all this was confirmed to us, we returned to Sudan, and we supported the new situation in form and

substance. To prove that we brought along all our fighters and our weapons. We were the first to take such a step, and we were the first group to turn over our weapons at a time when no other group did such a thing. Accordingly, al-Ansar's issues should have received attention. We were, of course, given this promise by the administration that was in office, namely, the civilian government and the provisional military council. A fact-finding committee was formed. The investigation in the (Wad Nubawi) case and the Aba Island case is still continuing, and we expect the committee to complete its work very soon. We expect to receive its report so that we can act accordingly and contribute to the political decision that will be based on that report.

[Question] Let us go back once again to the conflicts within the al-Mahdi family. Don't you believe that these conflicts could give the impression that they are no more than a dispute over a spiritual legacy?

[Answer] This is not a dispute over an inherited position since al-Khalifah 'Abdallah, al-Mahdi's first successor, was not personally related to Imam al-Mahdi. This is purely a spiritual matter. The succession of al-Khalifah 'Abdallah ibn al-Sayyid Muhammad was purely a spiritual succession that was due to his spiritual and political position in al-Mahdi's state. It was the spiritual relationship between him and Imam al-Mahdi himself that led him to the position of serving as the imam's representative. Evidence for this lies in the fact that when the nobility had differences with al-Khalifah, became involved in strife with him and attacked his position, Imam al-Mahdi issued a statement and a famous leaflet warning them not to go against al-Khalifah. In his last address--it was a Friday address--Imam al-Mahdi disavowed all the nobility in front of all the people because they were harassing al-Khalifah 'Abdallah. He also disavowed others, such as (al-Faki al-Mana), who at some point in time wanted the succession for himself. But he did not gain that position, which went to al-Khalifah 'Abdallah. Al-Mahdi had an opinion on that matter: the religious qualifications of a person were the basis for this matter.

After al-Mahdi's state was fought and defeated, it was the intention of the Condominium to have that heritage disappear from Sudan and, indeed, from the whole world. At that time Imam 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mahdi, whose stature does not compare with that of the al-Mahdi family and the other successors, took it upon himself to bring al-Ansar together and to revive the sect. This is what created the specific situation. After being known as Mr 'Abd-al-Rahman, al-Ansar persuaded him to become their imam, and they pledged their loyalty to him as their imam.

Imam al-Sadiq and Imam al-Hadi had a special position in the al-Mahdi family because they were committed to bringing al-Ansar together, uniting their ranks and fighting with Imam 'Abd-al-Rahman. They also served on the Advisory Council, which elects the imam. Imam al-Sadiq assumed that position upon the recommendation of Imam 'Abd-al-Rahman. Imam al-Hadi, however, was elected by the Advisory Council, which was made up of members of the al-Mahdi family and al-Ansar sect. Imam al-Hadi also had more contact with al-Ansar, and he had closer ties to them throughout his life. In addition, he had spiritual ties to them as well. In the incidents on Aba Island he was with al-Ansar, and the only members of the al-Mahdi family who were with him were his sons. He fought with al-Ansar, but when he felt that the bygone regime intended to put an end to

al-Ansar, he brought the fighting on the island to an end. He emigrated from Aba Island to avoid further bloodshed among al-Ansar and to continue the struggle against the bygone regime from abroad. This mystery occurred before he left Sudan, but the matter is in God's hands, and we are waiting for matters to become clear.

The *imamate* is earned; it is not inherited. As far as my position in the party--the Ummah Party, the imam's supporters--is concerned, I hold that position not because I am one of the imam's sons, as has been said, but because of the nature of my commitment to this work, the nature of my efforts with the imam, my commitment to him and my efforts to bring al-Ansar together. I was the one who called upon al-Ansar to emigrate from Sudan, and I was the first one to do so from abroad after the incidents on Aba Island. Al-Ansar emigrated afterwards; they were the ones who provided ammunition for the July 1976 Revolution after receiving training in Ethiopia and Libya.

[Question] What are the principal characteristics of your party? I am referring to the Ummah Party, the supporters of Imam al-Hadi?

[Answer] Ours is the original Ummah Party, the party of doctrine and the party that is known for its nationalism and patriotism and for encompassing all the Sudanese people on one level. This party was founded by Imam 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mahdi who made memorable statements. The following is one of them: "All my supporters are the Ummah Party, but not each Ummah Party supports me."

The door is open to all Sudanese patriots who are not members of the al-Ansar sect but who are concerned about their country and interested in reforming and improving it. It is possible for non-Muslims to participate in that organization because Islam looks after the rights of minorities.

We and members of our party are involved in modern sector activities; we are keeping the door open to the modern sector. But as far as dividing electoral precincts is concerned, we think that the ratio of university graduates should be limited to between 5 and 10 percent of total precincts. This is because most of the Sudanese people did not graduate from universities or institutions of higher learning. This measure would prevent bias. We think, in general, that the elections law is fair and represents all the country's traditional and modern sectors. The traditional sector should have a greater share in the distribution of geographical precincts because that reflects Sudan's current position. If social and political conditions change in the future, it may then be possible to change the elections laws. At the present time, however, the situation calls for a greater share of electoral precincts for the traditional sector. We believe in democracy, consultation, freedom of thought, freedom of speech and coexistence despite different ideas, and we disapprove of fanaticism and the tendency to fight others because of their ideas.

[Question] When you were opposing the previous regime, did you form any alliances with other activists, and was there any rapprochement and coordination between you and them?

[Answer] We were part of a front that opposed the bygone regime. The Sudanese people had to unite and forget their differences because these differences were

secondary when the country was in danger. We did in fact form an alliance with al-Sharif Husayn al-Hindi: we had a liaison with him and he had a liaison with Imam al-Hadi on Aba Island. We met with Imam al-Hadi abroad, and we continued the fighting and the struggle together. Before July 1971 all political tendencies, except for the communist party, were working within the National Front. But the alliances were changed after that. There was, for example, the Sudanese people's Grouping, which included the Ummah Party--the supporters of Imam al-Hadi; the Democratic Unionist Party; and the Sudanese chapter of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party. These parties worked together and used all available means, especially the political ones, to bring about the downfall of the bygone regime. At the same time we were allied with the Sudanese Popular Resistance Front, which comprised, in addition to our party, the Democratic Federation Party, independents and southerners. In this front in particular, we were concentrating on military action to overthrow the bygone regime. On the other hand, there was the Sudan Deliverance Front which included Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's group, the Communist Party and the Democratic Federation Party. We had not joined them in that front, and we continued our efforts after the National Front was disbanded following the national reconciliation of 1977. We have our own opinion of that reconciliation which came about in ways that are well-known and that I mentioned. I had returned to Sudan after that reconciliation, but I found that the regime was not serious about it so I left the country again.

[Question] What about your present alliances? Do you intend to form any alliances before the elections?

[Answer] We have stood alone up to now; we formed no alliances, and we established no ties with any front, except for that coalition which was formed with Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi's group. That group came to us and joined us. There is understanding and cooperation, for example, in the context of the Sudan Security Authority--the National Islamic Front is considered one of its influential members. It is an organization that plays an important role in expressing public opinion. There is also understanding and cooperation with the Islamic tendency on issues that have to do with the country's security and holding those who violate the law and the rebels in south Sudan accountable for their actions. This organization's actions have to do with supporting the armed forces, taking their side and helping them resolve everything that affects Sudan's independence, freedom, or security. It is natural for people to join forces with each other in such a matter. We thank God that all these agencies are adopting Islamic tendencies, and that bodes well. It is possible for all those people to agree in the future on a program that would firmly establish the laws of Muhammad as a foundation for government. That is our first and principal objective.

[Question] What have been your experiences and positions with the Arabs?

[Answer] Our opinion on the Middle East question is unequivocal. Imam al-Hadi's support for the Palestinian cause and for the countries that suffered a setback in 1967 was not just financial; he provided them with manpower support by making it possible for al-Ansar to volunteer to fight. His opinion was unequivocal: he adhered to the resolutions of the Khartoum summit. That meant no peace, no

negotiations and no infringement upon the Palestinian question. Our position has not changed: we still disapprove of any reconciliation, leniency or infringement upon the Palestinian question.

Regarding the question of the Iraq-Iran war, we were neutral at first because it is a war between Muslims. But when it became evident that Iran wanted to fight and Iraq was calling for peace, the matter was no longer an Islamic matter. Islam calls upon Muslims who are fighting each other to reconcile their differences and make peace. We think that going too far in the fighting is contrary to Islamic law and the Islamic character. That is why we condemned that method.

In general, our relations with the different Arab countries are friendly, but especially with the Libyan People's Arab Jamahiriyyah because it stood by us throughout the years of struggle. Libya's posture has been honorable, neighborly and fraternal. This is normal. May God reward the Libyans well. Iraq has also stood by the Sudanese cause and provided many Sudanese organizations with refuge and assistance. This is something that must be mentioned and commended. We are singling out these two countries to thank them and praise them on behalf of al-Ansar. As citizens of Sudan, we appreciate them and we are grateful to them. This is now a matter of record. God rewards those who do good deeds.

We thank God because our relations with countries in the Arab world are neither abnormal nor unsatisfactory.

Family's Worries Called Political

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[Interview with Ahmad al-Mahdi by 'Uthman Mirghani; in London; date not specified: "In a Candid Interview Ahmad al-Mahdi Talks about one of Sudan's Most Important Political Families and Says Its Worries Are Political and not Related to the Family"]

[Text] "I consider myself the family's patriarch; I am hoping we will overcome our differences through dialogue."

"My dealings with the previous regime protected the family from some dangers and protected al-Ansar from what was being planned for them."

"Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi rebelled against the leaders of the Ummah Party and devised his own method of unilateral action."

"Divisions within the Ummah Party can be corrected by repeating the experience of collective leadership and adhering to democracy as the course for party action."

"Islamic law has never prevented fellow citizens in the south from holding positions in the cabinet, in the courts, or in the legislature."

Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi insisted before this interview that he would not be in favor of talking about disputes within the Ummah Party because he hopes that these disputes will be overcome by dialogue between the leaders of the party and leaders of al-Ansar. Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi said that he would agree to talk about the subject, not to stir up old wounds, but rather to define some aspects of the conflict since doing that constitutes half the effort that is needed to find a solution.

Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi insisted that the al-Mahdi family was well and that relations between family members have not been affected. He said that he has always acted on the basis of his position as a family patriarch. He said that his cooperation with the previous regime caused him to incur huge financial losses but that it helped him protect the family and al-Ansar from some of what was being planned for them. Mr Ahmad al-Mahdi also touched upon some aspects of the conflict between him and his nephew al-Sadiq al-Mahdi regarding national reconciliation, the Islamic law statutes and the method of armed action in 1976. Here is the text of the interview.

[Question] What is happening now in the al-Mahdi family? What are the reasons for the current conflicts between leaders of that family?

[Answer] There is no doubt that conflict within the Ummah Party is considered an issue whose implications and effects are considerable. The truth about such conflicts must be understood, and everything that has a bearing on them ought to be comprehensible to all those who are interested in the party and its future. But at any rate, I do not like to focus on disputes which we hoped we could overcome so we can move on to what is more important and more significant.

It is a fact that throughout its history the Ummah Party has always had a strong organizational unity. The party was founded in the mid forties, and it then played a prominent role in achieving Sudan's independence. The Ummah Party's organizational ability on all levels, from top to bottom, is superior to that of all other Sudanese parties. It is well-known that the party is considered a platform for the al-Ansar sect, but support for the party is not confined to al-Ansar. The Ummah Party is supported by all Sudanese groups and elements. There is an old saying in the party which states that every follower of the al-Ansar sect supports the Ummah Party, but not every Ummah Party supports the al-Ansar sect. [Translator's note: There is a pun here on the word, "al-Ansar."] This means that every member of al-Ansar sect is essentially a member of the Ummah Party, but not all members of the Ummah Party are followers of al-Ansar sect. Many party leaders holding high positions in the party do not belong to the al-Ansar sect. But I have to pause here to say that I do not like to use the word, "sect," because the al-Ansar Society is above the word, "sect." However, I cannot find another word I could use to convey that same sense to the reader.

What is important is that numerous leaders of the Ummah Party did not belong to the al-Ansar organization, which is considered a historical and religious organization with a distinguished political position in Sudan. From a political standpoint, the al-Ansar religious organization functioned through the Ummah Party. In general, there were two branches of leadership. One branch had to do with al-Ansar's religious organizations, and the other had to do with the political organizations. The Ummah Party provided a political platform.

Consequently, groups from various other religious sects as well as a number of southerners were seen in that party. The name of the party--the Ummah [Nation] Party--was adopted originally because the aim of the party was to unite the Sudanese nation.

The party has always been strong and tenacious, preserving its organizational unity during all political crises and storms until Sudan's independence was achieved. That, we think, was one of the party's greatest victories. The party helped bring about stability in Sudan during the period that immediately followed independence. Although it was the largest political party in Sudan, it was always inclined to assume a national position and to hold its blatantly partisan positions in check. Evidence for this lies in the fact that when independence was achieved, the Ummah Party did not think of forming a partisan government in Sudan even though its positions in some of the elections would have enabled it to form a partisan government. Instead, the party preferred to go after a national consensus from the very first moment so it could bind the entire country together for the purpose of surviving the post independence period. Let me state here, for example, that after independence was declared from Sudan's parliament, it was the Ummah Party that suggested the formation of a national government to see the country through the post independence period which would be full of danger and critical situations, particularly in the wake of the constitutional vacuum that occurred immediately after the declaration of independence. It was thought then that in order to write the country's constitution, we had to have a national tendency and we had to have a national consensus to enable us to confront the country's problems.

Healthy and sound democracies in different parts of the world have such a consensus on national issues. If we were to use India as an example, I would say that had it not been for the tenaciousness and strength of its principal party, democracy in India as we see it today would not have survived. Many African countries or Third World countries may have lost their stability--and, to a certain extent, their independence as well--as a result of internal disintegration and an absence of a national organization that would join all the country's organizations together in an agreed upon framework. Such a bond is achievable provided the differences between these organizations are over marginal matters and small details that are of no major consequence.

That is why the Ummah Party called for the formation of a national government immediately after independence. It was also the Ummah Party that suggested supporting Isma'il al-Azhari as prime minister so that Sudan's first cabinet could be a national one. Top leaders of the Ummah Party made considerable sacrifices and served in Isma'il al-Azhari's cabinet. In al-Azhari's first government, for example, the party's secretary general quite impartially and sincerely agreed to serve as minister under Isma'il al-Azhari. Leaders of the Ummah Party, like Ibrahim Ahmad and 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Ali Taha--and these are men of presidential caliber--overlooked their partisanship and rose above trivial matters to serve in the Council of Ministers under the leadership of a man who was considered one of their competitors. We must commend this national spirit which adorned leaders of the Ummah Party then. I do not think that the leader of the Ummah Party--my brother, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was the leader then--would have refused to serve in Isma'il al-Azhari's government if there was a national need for his service.

The party has always been devoted to this national course.

Disputes after October

[Question] Then, when did the disputes within the Ummah party occur?

[Answer] There were divisions within the party after the October Revolution. The principal reason for these divisions was the new method which Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi wanted to start within the party. That method gradually led to the emergence of our son, Mr al-Sadiq, as leader, and this was brought about in a manner that is unique and quite separate from the style and mode which are customary for the Ummah Party regarding its internal tenaciousness on the one hand and its national confrontation of the country's issues on the other. These divisions within the Ummah Party were reflected on the political scene in Sudan in general, and the remedy that was available for them was that of reconsidering party formations and organizations so that the party's leadership would be vested in a group rather than in one individual leader. The unilateral approach to leadership had never been considered since there were numerous leaders. Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi discovered that later, and 1 or 2 months before the 25 May 1969 coup he returned to the cohesive fold of the party. Unfortunately, however, this new experience with collective leadership for the party was not long-lived because there was a second military coup which suspended public liberties and banned political organizations and democratic activity.

After that coup all of Sudan embarked upon a new stage during which a front was trying to bring the country's different political forces together to oppose the new military regime and, in particular, the communist hegemony which emerged on the scene with the military coup. One of the curious contradictions which may be recorded is the fact that the May movement started out in 1969 as an ultra left-wing movement and ended in 1985 as an ultra right-wing movement. It is that contradiction which may have undermined and weakened the May organization and stripped it of its ability to deal with issues.

What is important, anyway, is that during this period of the May movement, there were two tendencies within the party--and that was extremely unfortunate. It was hoped that after the successful popular uprising of April 1985, the party would succeed in overcoming these divisions. But once again we were faced with unilateral actions which threatened to do major harm to the party's unity. That is why a person observing Sudan's conditions these days would note there are numerous leaders within the party. That is why the party has different faces, some of whom proclaim themselves, "the new national Ummah Party;" others say they represent "the imam's faction of the Ummah Party;" and still others are calling for one Ummah Party only, the basic and original Ummah Party.

The Collective Leadership

[Question] You've touched upon the matter of collective leadership which was to be put into effect in the Ummah Party during the sixties. Do you believe that collective leadership as a method can provide an effective solution to the conflicts and divisions within the Ummah Party at the present time?

[Answer] Yes. There is no doubt that collective leadership is necessary in the current situation. It is also necessary to adhere to democracy. No individual is allowed to rise above the organization and impose on the party his own opinions, ideas and wishes. We find that unacceptable because it hurts the party. Leadership should be collective, and there should be a commitment to democracy as a course for the party. It would not be right to ask for democracy for Sudan and then not allow political parties to practice that democracy within the party and its ranks. Unilateral actions, hegemony and opinions imposed from above may be dangerous phenomena if they become part of the political scene in general. The country could then be subjected to another civilian dictatorship, if one may say so. The Ummah Party must prevent this danger, especially after the bitter experience Sudan has had in the past.

[Question] Are the ongoing disputes between individuals in al-Mahdi family political or family disputes?

[Answer] Let me explain an important matter here. Some of our brothers in the Arab press have been talking about these disputes as though they were family disputes, disputes within the al-Mahdi family, or positions assumed by individuals. That is not true. The truth is that these disputes are neither family disputes nor positions assumed by individuals; they are nothing like that at all. They are rather differences about political methods and political directions.

The family is well; its members are sticking together and preserving the family's traditions and decorum. There is no crisis within the al-Mahdi family. The disintegration and conflict which appear to be happening within this family are the product of existing political conflicts. Those who talk about the conflict as a family conflict or a dispute between individuals are avoiding the real issue. The fact is that the existing conflict is a political dispute that manifests itself in the conflicting organizations which were formed. It is a political difference on objectives and on outlook. It is a political difference on points of view regarding pending political issues.

The Difference between Two Methods

[Question] You say that the conflict has to do with differences in directions and methods. Can you shed more light on this matter? In other words, what is the difference between your method and the methods of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi or Wali-al-Din al-Hadi?

[Answer] It is necessary to clarify this matter. For example, we do blame Mr al-Sadiq for attempting to go along with the leaders of the May 1969 coup from the very beginning. A short time after the coup he initiated a dialogue with the leaders of the coup, and he participated in that dialogue as an individual; neither the party's agencies nor its patron, the late Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi, had authorized him to conduct such a dialogue. The party's patron usually carries considerable weight, and what he says carries much weight with the public. Accordingly, his position of leadership is significant, but it is neither dominant nor authoritarian. This is because the party has its old traditions and its distinguished style of leadership. When Imam 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mahdi and

Imam al-Sadiq led the party, the party's patron did not dominate or control the party's leaders despite the great position he enjoyed. The party's patron always tried to observe democratic practices within the party. He tried to adopt the opinion which party agencies arrived at democratically instead of dominating the party and imposing his opinion on it.

After the May 1969 coup the party's patron, Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi, thought that it was necessary to stay away from that new military regime particularly after it became evident that it was to a great extent a communist coup. It was thought, therefore, that going along with that regime would have a major effect on the country's destiny. But Mr al-Sadiq went ahead and initiated a dialogue with the regime, and that was an erroneous move on his part because it was unilateral. The result of this dialogue was that Mr al-Sadiq was arrested, or rather, this dialogue was one of the reasons why he was arrested at the time. His arrest embarrassed the party's leaders considerably because the party was mobilizing to oppose the ultra left-wing regime.

Differences in policy toward the regime emerged after that. The most important aspects of that difference may have been the armed action that some leaders took in the mid seventies to oppose the May regime. There was a difference in points of view because of that action since the use of violence and weapons and seeking the assistance of foreign troops in Sudan's political disputes are all unacceptable matters to the party's leaders. There were many things that were wrong with the military attempt that was made in 1976 to remove the regime. The failure of that attempt may have been proof of the fact that its method and the bases upon which it was undertaken were improper.

National reconciliation came after that in 1977. It too came about unilaterally; the organizations of the National Front did not conduct adequate deliberations together about this reconciliation. Our party thought that rushing into an agreement with former President Numayri was improper. Our party thought this matter was handled improperly because it produced no results. In fact, it broke up the opposition and scattered the national forces that had come together in one front to oppose the regime. As a result of this reconciliation the opposition was handed over to the May regime on a silver platter! The reconciliation enabled the May regime to play a game that divided and scattered national forces and used different methods to polarize individuals and leaders in the opposition. This position was severely criticized by the party's organizations, and party circles were quite uncomfortable about it.

These are a few examples of positions in which there is a difference in method or direction.

Al-Sadiq and the Party

[Question] Are there specific reasons that gave rise to this situation and led to division within the party?

[Answer] This is very unfortunate, but it seems that Mr al-Sadiq has been interested in having his own party. Consequently, he is now enjoying a special existence and having his own private party, and leaders who are extremely dangerous and important to the Ummah Party and to all the followers of al-Ansar will have nothing to do with his party.

The public will speak its mind and will evaluate the matter of Mr al-Sadiq organizing his own party, but there is no way that Mr al-Sadiq can become all of the Ummah Party.

[Question] Did you meet with Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Wali-al-Din al-Hadi to solve the problems that are pending between you?

[Answer] We meet frequently as relatives and as individuals of the same family at numerous social or family occasions. In view of this fact we are part of an indivisible whole. I am always trying to maintain family relations on a high level, and I am also trying to maintain the family's sense of decorum and traditions. I find myself in particular in a very sensitive position because I am like everyone's father since I am considered the family's patriarch. That is why you will find that I am always trying to maintain the channels of communication open with all members of the family. I also try to keep relations as good as they can be.

To put it briefly, family relations are good and normal. Some of what appears to be a conflict within the family may be the result of political differences. Members of the family are sticking together, and the family is strong. We are hoping that it will always be that way. In fact, I hope that family relations will create a proper climate that will allow members of the family to continue their dialogue and their joint deliberations so that we can have one, uniform political aim, if that is possible. Even if there is a difference, I hope it will not be the result of people drifting apart or having misunderstandings. There is no doubt that it would be quite a blessing for people to disagree calmly after deliberations and discussions instead of disagreeing because of misunderstandings. It is always better to settle our disputes democratically. On my part I am always hoping that leaders of the Ummah Party, of the al-Mahdi family and of al-Ansar in general succeed in creating a constructive dialogue that would become a model and an example for other political organizations.

[Question] Was there any discussion of existing problems during those meetings so that solutions to those problems could be found and the ranks of the Ummah Party unified?

[Answer] No, there were no discussions on that subject. The fact is that a few days after the Rajab uprising, everyone was preoccupied with following developments. The actions taken by each group stemmed from that group's standing in politics.

In order to keep the problem open to discussion, as I mentioned previously, the political foundation of the Ummah Party should remain one foundation whose wishes ought to be unified. The political organizations and structures that are formed must also reflect the wishes of that foundation. This will help create a favorable climate within the party, and it will also help avoid the negative aspects of democracy in general in Sudan. It is the duty of all leaders to strive to express the wishes of the public they represent.

The Leaders' Meeting

[Question] Is there hope that a meeting between leaders of the al-Mahdi family would be held soon to settle existing family and political conflicts?

[Answer] It is hoped that a settlement of these differences can be reached. However, there is a fact that must be dealt with: political aims, political evaluations and political analyses are quite different. In spite of that, let me say that there is no issue that cannot be solved if we seek that solution in a democratic manner. If people were to put their heads together and think about this objectively, it is not unlikely that they can eventually achieve a uniform view on major issues.

If you want an example of the aspects of the conflict, there is the question of Islamic laws. Mr al-Sadiq thinks these laws are not worth the ink or paper they are written on. Many of those who went along with him subscribe to that opinion. We, however, think that these laws have an orientation that is clearly Islamic. We've affirmed in the past that some errors were made in implementing these laws, which were enacted somewhat hastily. There are also a few political circumstances that accompanied the implementation of these laws and kept them from being truly understood. However, these laws represent an Islamic orientation from which we do not wish to retreat. In fact, we want to affirm the positive attributes of these laws, and we want to try to remedy all their negative attributes. Before talking about repealing these laws and throwing them away, it is our duty to evaluate and study them and to prepare an alternative to them which would not allow us to lose the Islamic gains that have been achieved. These gains were not achieved by Numayri's wishes or by the wishes of the May regime; they were rather achieved by the will of Almighty God.

How can we do away with divine ordinances in our laws? Islamic law is something in the heart of every Sudanese citizen, and we must affirm it as something that has been gained. We should not retreat from these laws. Instead, we must deal with the negative attributes that accompanied their implementation. Making light of the Islamic aspect of the laws will be harmful to the Islamic aims of the country in general. That is why we do not agree with those who say that these laws have no value. We also do not agree with the opinion which states that the application of Islamic law will infringe upon the rights of minorities or will harm fellow citizens in south Sudan. We rather think that the application of Islamic law will guarantee the rights of minorities and affirm the identity of southerners.

There is some distortion of the facts regarding the application of Islamic law in Sudan. Some people say that the application of Islamic law will bar southerners from assuming high positions in the state. That is not true. There is nothing to keep fellow citizens in the south from assuming executive, legislative or judicial positions. There is even nothing to keep anyone of them from becoming president. Although Islamic law has always been one of the sources of legislation in Sudanese constitutions, it has never prevented or barred fellow citizens in the south from positions in the cabinet, in the courts or elsewhere. Never have the Sudanese people--especially Muslims--objected to any southerner assuming any judicial or executive position. Islam is not a fanatic or racist religion; in Islam no race is superior to the other. However, it is a regrettable mistake that some leaders make when they are concentrate on certain aspects of Islamic application and ignore others, thereby making the picture incomplete or rather distorted and bad for Islam in some parts. The former regime in Sudan made that mistake when it concentrated on some aspects of Islam that ultimately hurt the Islamic cause. There are a few political leaders now who are engaged in making those same mistakes.

If Islam were applied with tolerance and flexibility and if the process of deriving rules and principles from their original source--the Koran and the Prophetic Tradition--were relied upon, the tremendous cultural and human heritage that Islam has to offer will be beneficial. At the same time we can stay in step with reality and the requirements of the age. Because there is no coercion in religion, no Muslim can justify or accept the use of pressure and violence to influence non-Muslims. It is rather our duty to pursue a tolerant course that would attract people to Islam instead of forcing them to accept the religion. People should be drawn to Islam without using violence or confiscating their rights.

This is the course that the Ummah Party and its leaders are calling for. It is the course that party leaders have always followed since the days of Imam 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mahdi.

[Question] How much support do you have?

[Answer] It is difficult for me to answer that question. At the present time no one can declare with certainty how much support he has, nor can anyone predict what the effect of the past 16 years has been on the people and the electorate. But I do believe that everyone who was a member of the Ummah Party and understood its policy and the situation upon which it was founded is supporting us. And that constitutes in fact considerable support.

The Relationship with Numayri's Regime

[Question] You spoke about the national reconciliation of 1977 and about al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's involvement in that reconciliation. It seems that you did not view this matter favorably. What may come to mind in that regard is a question regarding your involvement and your work with the previous regime. What were your motives for working with the previous regime if you are critical of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's involvement in the national reconciliation?

[Answer] My dealings with the May regime did not begin until after the unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the regime. They did not begin until after the armed action that was carried out by some leaders of the National Front.

As I mentioned previously al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was one of al-Ansar's first leaders to seek dialogue with the May regime after it was established in 1969. Mr al-Sadiq did that at a time when leaders of al-Ansar preferred to stay away from the regime. At that time, when the incidents on Aba Island occurred, I was not in Sudan. After that, because of political conditions in Sudan, I stayed in Britain for about 5 years as a refugee and did not return to Sudan until after 1974. It was then that we found the regime's positions had changed when compared with its positions from 1970 to 1973. We found that the regime had turned away from its ultra left-wing course and had started looking for a way to cooperate with national leaders.

It is our judgment that Mr al-Sadiq had an understanding with the regime after the incidents on Aba Island. He also had an understanding with the regime when he was in Egypt. The only time he blatantly opposed the regime was in the 1976 military action. But before that date many maneuvers and memoranda were exchanged between him and the regime.

What is important is that after the unsuccessful attempt of 1976, which drove the National Front into armed action, I had to oppose that armed method of political activity. I had to oppose political activity which is conducted from outside Sudan. I have always thought--and many in the National Front share my views--that we cannot rely on political activity that is conducted from abroad; nor can we rely on support from abroad. We must also not resort to violence because that would involve the country in conflicts which could lead to its disintegration as a unified country. The fact is that seeking the assistance of outsiders to carry out the invasion of Sudan did not in fact lead to anything but violent confrontation with the army. The ultimate outcome of that operation was that it strengthened and supported the position of the May regime, particularly since the regime took advantage of the matter and threw all the national leaders in prison. I was one of the first leaders to be imprisoned, and we were all subjected to the worst and most violent treatment. In fact, my life was threatened. The regime put me in prison quickly because I was one of the leaders who had always opposed it. It is true that I was engaged in dialogue with a number of officials who had been sent by the regime to meet me, but that dialogue never rose to the level of political agreement with the regime. A dialogue to clarify positions is one thing, and a dialogue that leads to political agreement is another. We were always explaining to the regime that confrontation with national leaders was futile and that it would be better to talk with them and to think with them.

I used to think that national reconciliation was merely a weigh station in the process of dialogue, rather than a goal that is sought to achieve temporary political gains. We wanted this reconciliation to mark the beginning of a political dialogue; we did not want guns or violence to be used. Unfortunately, however, a few leaders of the National Front preferred to call the National Reconciliation an agreement between them and President Numayri. I am referring here to one of the leaders of the front, al-Sharif Husayn al-Hindi--may God have mercy on his soul. He had many reservations about the reconciliation agreement that was reached in Port Sudan. That is why he did what Mr al-Sadiq did and did not return to Sudan.

All opposition leaders who reconciled with the regime were soon disappointed. They discovered that the political will was entirely controlled by one person only in the regime: former President Numayri. Political leaders continued to squirm in that situation until the popular uprising last April.

My attitude toward the regime was based on two principal points. The first point was to avoid armed conflict in political activity so that many of the dangers that lie hidden in this method can be avoided. The second point was to open channels of dialogue with the regime for the purpose of changing its positions on numerous issues. The atmosphere of dialogue helped us mobilize the masses and created a close relationship with al-Ansar and with those who make up the basic force of the Ummah Party. Had it not been for that course of action, we would have been totally isolated from the base of support and from the masses.

[Question] Does this mean that your cooperation with the previous regime was tantamount to a reaction to the incidents of 1976?

[Answer] Yes. Had it not been for the incidents of 1976, there would have been no rapprochement between us and the regime. We were expecting the regime to comply with the popular demands which we were always setting forth in our dialogue with officials.

[Question] Had you been consulted about the 1976 military action whose aim was to overthrow the regime, would your position toward that action have been different?

[Answer] The fact is that I was consulted on that action, and I explained my position clearly to others. The preliminary coordination and planning for that action began in London at a time when Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi had not appeared on the scene of political activity outside the country. I advised others to move slowly and deliberately in this regard, and I called their attention to the dangers that surround such an action. I also called attention to the need for careful preparation so that the action will not become merely an effort to drive guerilla leaders into death and destruction. An agreement was reached at that time on some points and principles that had to be followed. But the leaders who carried out the action later made many mistakes which undermined the strong strike force whose action could have been used to serve the interests of the popular movement in Sudan.

[Question] What did you gain from your cooperation with the previous regime?

[Answer] I gained nothing at all. In fact, I think my financial losses during that period may have been greater than anyone else's. My property was confiscated, and the financial settlements that were made were meager. I thus suffered a tremendous financial loss. I find myself always laughing sarcastically at the propaganda which tries to suggest that I benefited from the previous regime. As I mentioned, I was one of those who suffered losses, not one of those who made gains. I was always protesting to the regime because of the damages that my property and my commercial business suffered.

[Question] Actually I was not talking about a financial profit that you may have gained from your cooperation with the regime. What I meant by asking that question is this: Was cooperation with the regime beneficial in helping protect the family from the regime's wrath or something like it?

[Answer] Yes, it did. Yes. Although I lost financially, I succeeded in preserving a climate of reconciliation and dialogue. Had it not been for our positions, the regime would have found an opportunity to eliminate and harm all nationalists on the scene, especially al-Mahdi family and al-Ansar leaders who could have been the first to be hurt and harassed. I believe that we succeeded in preventing such harm. We also preserved freedom of action for al-Ansar. There had been discussions in the regime about keeping al-Ansar even from praying in their mosques and from having any social presence. This is a situation that brings to mind what al-Ansar suffered from early during the period of the Condominium when al-Ansar were not allowed supererogatory devotions and to take part in community prayers. Al-Ansar were also denied any social, religious or political presence. It was not easy for al-Ansar and for a few other religious organizations to maintain their activities without establishing some kind of understanding with the ruling regime at the time.

Because of our policy and our directions and because we kept some channels of communication open with the regime, we were able to preserve the al-Ansar organization and its members' ability to take action. There were, of course, a few actions that were carried out by other leaders, and these threatened the organization and its ability to take action. The 1976 action may have been one of those.

[Question] Is there any hope that these ongoing inter and intra party differences will be overcome?

[Answer] If we pursue the method of dialogue, we will create an appropriate climate in which these differences can be narrowed. We will then be able to resolve and overcome these differences. Through dialogue and the use of democracy we can even solve our national problems. We can even solve, for example, the problem of the south, which is draining Sudan now.

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TUNISIA

UPCOMING POWER STRUGGLE PREDICTED, TRENDS WATCHED

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/Article: "A Strong Adversary of Mzali's Whose Ambitions Are Great and Whose Goals Are Obvious"

/Text/ Someone visiting Tunisia these days will realize that talk about change has become the focus of the discussions and various concerns in Tunisian journalistic and political circles. While there is unanimity it is inevitable that such change will occur, the dispute revolves around how deep and comprehensive it will be.

Some people expect that the anticipated change will not go beyond the outer layer of the regime, in the sense that all that can happen is that a ministerial change will be made by Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali in his current cabinet to strengthen its staying power in the face of the economic and political pressures to which it is exposed. Meanwhile, others believe that the change might extend deeper down, more accurately to what lies below the layers, in view of the emergence of a strong, shrewd person who is said to have been able to put most of the strings in his own hand and carry out half the basic step for advancing to the center of power. This man is Mr Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the minister of national security.

While Mohamed Mzali is focussing most of his attention on the continuity of the Bourguibist course during the life of the greater combatant, or in the event he departs, and is anxious, as each day dawns, to inform his "teacher and leader" of every detail, large and small, in the country, from the overturning of a car in one place or the rainfall in another, to the latest regional, Arab and international developments and vicissitudes, the new star, as some people close to him describe him, that is, Ben Ali, is considered to conform to that type of intelligent person who works in the shadows for many years and appears at a sudden moment to put all the keys to things in his own hands.

While the majority of the political currents inside and outside the regime concur that Mohamed Mzali, a classic intellectual and ideologue as well as a devotee of Arabhood and a nationalist, is a contented man whose ambitions do not go beyond the limits of Bourguibism and the ruling Destourian Party,

these ambitions do not go beyond the limits of Bourguibism and the ruling Destourian Party, these currents also agree that Ben Ali's ambition is unlimited and that his leadership characteristics indicate that if he can attain his ambitions he will leave his obvious marks on the future of Tunisia for many years.

In the context of a rapid comparison between them, the people who know the two men say that Mzali, who dreams of the continuation of the Bourguibist course and strives for it night and day, relies on the old guard group which grew up under the tutelage of the greater combatant and the school of the Destourian Party, while Ben Ali, who is now rising like an arrow released by a strong bow under high tension, is trying to clean out his future working team and assistants calmly and thoughtfully from personnel who are far from the limelight and public life.

A Ministerial Change

A discussion about either man's program of government is not premature, in view of the heightened pace of events. The interest of the Tunisian circles concerned at this period appears fixed to the status of the current cabinet, which resembles a ship piloted by the captain, Mohamed Mzali, in the midst of the storms of delapidated economic conditions and fluctuating political conditions.

From what is being repeatedly stated in a narrow framework, one can infer that the next few days will witness a cabinet change aimed at the Foreign Ministry, since Paris--Hedi Mabrouk, Tunisia's ambassador to Paris--will take the place either of the foreign minister, Beji Caid Essebsi, or the minister of economy, and the change will also extend to the Ministry of Defense, since it is expected that the current minister, Slaheddine Baly, will be changed; he might be replaced by Mezni Chkair.

It has been observed that both Essebsi and Baly were on missions outside the country in recent days. The former went to Algeria, then Mauritania, then news of him was cut off and the media no longer mentioned anything about the mission he was assigned to or the country in which he was present; the latter went to the United States on a mission which appeared to be connected to regional developments and the visit by the American vice president, George Bush, to Tunisia, then Egypt.

Bush came to Tunisia at the head of a large American delegation among whose members was the assistant in the American State Department, Richard Murphy. There is unanimity that this visit was devoted to anticipated regional likelihoods and related to what has been said about a threat the Tunisian government received in the wake of the well known Mediterranean developments, warning that Tunisian territory would not be remote from the tongues of flame in the event they broke out in this area because of its good relations with the United States of America.

It is certain that the American vice president tried to convince the Tunisian officials he met of the importance of a stable American military presence on Tunisian territory and of the importance that this presence transcend mere limited facilities to the establishment of naval and air bases. However, it is also certain that Habib Bourguiba confronted this American desire with outright rejection and insistence on the continuation of the previous Tunisian policy based on the rule of friendship toward all and the failure to enter into Arab and international polarizations.

The information indicates that Bush informed Tunisian officials that the United States had released the aid allocated to Tunisia, the goal of the freeze on which in the past seems to have been to exert further pressure to compel the Tunisian government to yield to what Washington seeks, especially as far as accepting the establishment of military bases on its territory and tilting toward one of the conflicting bodies in the region are concerned.

The arguments which Tunisian officials marshal (or, more properly, the majority of Tunisian officials, since there are people who support the American viewpoint) state that Tunisia's departure from its previous policy, whose foundations were laid by Habib Bourguiba and which Prime Minister Mzali is adhering to forcefully, would subject it to regional tempests and that it is its insistence on rejecting polarization and the policy of axes that will provide it with the necessary, essential stability for confronting the current stifling economic crisis.

Conflicting Currents

What makes the situation more critical and raises the expected possibilities of a great degree of delicacy sooner or later is that the millstone of crushing political struggles among a number of tendencies and currents is grinding on within Tunisia, which seems clear and tranquil outside. Among these are the following main currents:

The first current, which is that of preserving Bourguibism and Tunisia's non-alignment with existing regional and international pacts. Representing this current is the present prime minister, who is considered the one most devoted to the teachings and directives of the "greater combatant" and relies on a number of long-standing leaders who flourished under the aegis of the ruling party and its various bodies and institutions.

The second current, that of the traditional opposition, differs from the first current only insofar as who is in the seat of power and who is sitting in the chair of a given ministry or is given one position or another are concerned. A number of former ministers represent this current, including the former minister of the interior, Driss Guiga, who was overthrown by the "bread revolution" and was sentenced, in absentia, to prison for 8 years, Tahar Belkhodja, who chose seclusion, silence and avoidance of the limelight, and Azouz Lasrane, former minister of economy, known to be in the vanguard of experts on economic affairs.

As regards Habib Jr, who was removed from the position of advisor to the president by his father a while ago and kept at the head of the economic organization, the National Bank over a dispute or violation in the Tunisian Airlines company, it was noted that he was included in the Tunisian delegation to the talks with Bush, which was considered in effect his return to his former position, although this return has not yet been officially announced.

On the sidelines of the current of opposition within the regime, one can list the trade union opposition whose banner is carried by Habib Achour; his direct clash with the prime minister led him to prison and, in spite of the assertion by official bodies that he is finished for good, he still has strong influence in circles of labor groups.

In addition to these two currents, that is, the two clashing currents of the authorities and the blocs which each current comprises, there are two currents of opposition from outside the regime. These are the currents of the religious forces and groups and the nationalist and left-wing parties and forces. These two currents contain a large number of parties and forces, including major forces and parties and phantom and marginal ones. The ideological premises of these groups and grouping range from bringing down the current regime and establishing a new one in accordance with new bases and policies to demanding specific reforms, which also range from striking at the roots of the current regime to settling for minor, limited changes.

The Economic Crisis

These forces, as is the case with the opposition within the regime, are trying to benefit from the delapidated economic situation to pursue the provocation of the authorities, or a limited segment of them. In this regard, it is well known that the abovementioned "bread revolution" at the beginning of last year was identified with parties which bore responsibility for these events and paid the price in the form of prison, expulsion, or banishment.

Many people in power and outside it believe that the current economic crisis, in the form in which it is being discussed, is contrived and that Tunisia, in comparison with neighboring countries and some Arab and third world countries, ought to be in the full flower of life. These people point out that Tunisia is one of the very few countries which are self-sufficient in terms of food products and oil and some other consumer industries.

However, what these people say, although there is much truth in it, is not to deny that Tunisia is facing what the whole world is facing and that the crisis in this country is totally obvious, in the form of the unemployment one can observe, in the form of the hundreds indeed thousands of young people with whom the streets and coffee houses are crowded during hours when one is presumed to be working during the day, and in the form of the probable drop in the number of tourists with whom the hotels and restaurants of Tunisia are normally filled during this period each year.

When one asks a question about the causes of the economic crisis in Tunisia, officials cite an unending series of such causes, among them:

First, the oil crisis and the drop in oil prices throughout the world. They say that this matter has led to a reduction in Arab aid and a drop in revenues from domestic oil which is surplus to the quantities of domestic consumption and is exported.

Second, the drop in the earnings of Tunisian manpower abroad, in view of the bad economic situation some European and Arab countries are going through because of regional developments in the past year.

Third, the inclusion of Spain and Portugal in the Common Market, which has led to intense competition between what Tunisia and these two countries export to the countries of Western Europe, especially citrus fruit.

Fourth, the drop in the number of Western tourists because of the fear of instability and anticipated disturbances in the area and because of poor economic conditions in Europe, which is the main source of tourist activity as far as Tunisia is concerned.

This is the true picture of Tunisia, which from abroad seems calm and tranquil. Adding to the delicacy of the possibilities which arise from this picture is what is said about a struggle which is now on the verge of shifting from a secret to open status, between France and the United States and between those who are called the "French school" and the "American school" in the Tunisian ruling bodies.

In this context, it is being said that the proponents of "Gallicism" and the continuation of the French experiment are establishing their pre-eminence in civilian bodies and institutions, cultural and social ones specifically, and that people with American tendencies have attained key positions and major centers in some sensitive agencies which have a strong grip and the last word.

11887

CSO: 4504/257

TUNISIA

VARIOUS OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS LISTED, DISCUSSED

Tunis AL-ANWAR AL-TUNISIYAH in Arabic 16 Mar 86 p 2

/Article: "30 Political Movements in Tunisia, the Most Recent of Which is the Hizballah!"/

/Text/ In addition to open parties and movements, recognized and non-recognized, which are six in number, secret political movements exist which might exceed 30 in number.

They are movements which are marked by extremism and clandestine activity. They have not been able to influence the course of events and change them, nor have they been powerful, for reasons of the elements of their own strength, either.

These movements are not the offspring of the past few years. Some of them came into being and grew in the period of the sixties, for instance movements having an Arab nationalist nature and movements of a marxism which is determinant in deviationist Russia. Some of them appeared in the latter seventies, constituting, initially, a center of gravity which rapidly became "senile" due to rifts and intellectual antagonisms. In this regard one can mention the Islamic movement or the "Brothers." What has perhaps characterized these movements, especially in the recent period, is the rift which has given birth to other movements or the apostasy which has further weakened them.

The Marxist-Leninist movements have split up into 12, the most important of which are the Tunisian Workers, the Democratic Nationalists, the Initiative Committees, the Revolutionary Communists and the Democratic Unionists. As for the Arab Nationalist Movement, that in turn has been exposed to fragmentation among Nasirists. Nasir has come to have adherents, the thinker 'Ismat Sayf-al-Dawlah has come to have adherents and the "Green Book" has come to have other adherents! The people embracing the thinking of the Ba'th have not had any luck in unifying their ranks. The Arab Vanguard has appeared, the Syrian Ba'th has appeared, and a branch which advocates Arab marxism has broken off from them. It should be observed that the people embracing these ideas in the form of Arabhood and marxism were to be found in large numbers in the ranks of the students and some intellectuals, in the form of teachers and professors in particular, contrary to the Islamic current which at the

beginning was to be found outside the university then dominated it in an almost total manner, due to the support of some peasants, tradespeople and even government employees. However, in spite of the solidarity which at the beginning appeared to be a distinctive feature of this current, schism rapidly spread through it. Consequently, ten movements became prominent, the most extremist of which were the Liberation Party, the Sufists, the Shiites, Proselytization and the Islamic Vanguard. The list is a lengthy one.

Various Means and a Single Goal!

Although change through violence is one of all these movements' objectives, and although a rupture with the regime and the government is one of these currents' expressions, the view of each branch regarding the nature of society and the nature after the change in it makes enemies among the whole! This is natural, when we realize that each branch has been condemned for loyalty to some foreign idea and regime.

The Marxists propound as an example of the Tunisia of tomorrow the Albania of today. The Arab nationalists have nostalgia for the Egypt of Nasir or the Iraq of al-Bakr. Another branch of marxists is inclined toward the Chinese experience, or Cuba and Nicaragua. It is no longer a secret today that making a show of carrying the Green Book everywhere has now become a conviction on the part of some people, and the Iranian example and the "Islamic revolution" are not absent either, although some Islamic currents have repudiated everyone who believes in them or even mentions them.

These movements also flourished abroad and grew both in the Arab East and in the European countries, France and Germany in particular. More than one document has given evidence of their extensions and foreign organization. More than one event (the 1973 war, the Iraq-Iran war, the change in young people in China) have given evidence of what we have stated. Indeed, they even include some which issue papers abroad, including AL-TALI'AH, AL-QASAM and AL-MATRAQAH, and some which belong to Arab revolutionary organizations which are present in most countries and are led by one man.

Barriers and Difficulties!

More than one observer is inclined to determine that the source of the causes of the weakness of these movements is that what they propound has remained confined to foggy general notions and is not a material diagnosis and realistic programs, and that may also be attributed to these movements' reliance on secret action and means of survival which do not enjoy feasibility.

The Hizballah, for example, which has appeared recently in the university and which a group of workers in Germany has formed, in such circumstances propounds only the need for people's readiness for an expected miracle which will come to compensate for the dominance of the machine over man! The Liberation Party basically negates secular laws and calls for a return to the

system of the caliphate, the command of the faithful and women's return to the home. It has expressed these ideas in publications which some adherents have distributed on the streets (especially the Bab Djedid and Malacine areas). As to the other more secular movements, their critical contemplation of the country's economic and social situation has created only new-old ideas. Regarding the crisis of the Workers' Federation, they raise the need to snatch the unions away from the enemies of "union action;" regarding getting the university out of its chronic state, they display a call for implanting democratic education; regarding developing the country economically, the need is to establish the pattern of socialist production. Meanwhile, South Korea has developed and advanced under a purely capitalist pattern of production!

What has been mentioned raises a fact whose gist is that these movements are not, as some people allege, movements of educated persons; even the figures assert that. Out of 1,558,000 educated persons, these movements, all together, have been able to pre-empt no more than 20,000 activists and sympathizers.

All in all, the secret Tunisian political movements remain a product of a society which is developing and moving and also a product of an education which knows no limits and does not distinguish between one idea and another. Perhaps they are also due to a foreign "jealousy" or will which does not like and is not enthusiastic about the experience of a small country such as ours. This is how those who have chosen overt action explain the story of secrecy. The "leaders" of the secret movements, whose number may exceed 30, advocate the opposite of this!

11887

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TUNISIA

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE OF PORTS EXAMINED

Tunis DIALOGUE in French 7 Apr 86 pp 34-36

[Article by Hedi Loumi: "Ports of Tunisia: Magnetic Poles of Development"]

[Text] Tunisia, with its rich maritime heritage and privileged geographic position in the heart of the Mediterranean, has since independence invested in the modernization of its port system, in order to adapt it to the new conditions of trade with the Mediterranean and the Arab world.

Several years ago its campaign to develop economic ports well-integrated to their surroundings moved into second gear.

The impact of port and maritime activities on economic dynamics needs no further proof. For a country like Tunisia, situated in the heart of the Mediterranean, ports have since the dawn of time been magnetic poles of development and windows opening to the world outside. Carthage, after all, was the most important trading center in the Mediterranean, the place from which intense maritime relations between East and West were established. Ancient history tells us that the first commercial shipping transactions between Tunisia and the countries on the Eastern side of the Mediterranean go back to the Phoenician era (Ninth Century).

Carthage at the time had dealings with the ports of Ceuta (Morocco), Tyr, Sidon, Ougarit and Byblos. The port of Masa in Sud-Ouest de Sousse represented a timid step toward the Orient.

This small historical digression is necessary. It enables us to see the nation's port activities on a broad canvas of time and space.

Today our ports--which have grown in number and diversified in activity--form a network of basic instrumentalities in the service of external commerce, since through them is channeled 90 percent of the commercial transactions between Tunisia and the outside world.

The role of the port facilities is going to get bigger, given the priority the authorities give to exports and the diversification of external markets.

Note here that we are talking about irreversible national decisions: economic and cultural opening to the outside, permanent and fertile intercourse with the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, encouragement of the export of Tunisian products.

But in order to understand the dialectical relationship between economic and port activity, one should begin by describing the structure, dimensions, functions and characteristics of present ports and those which are to be grafted on to the current network.

On Tunisia's coast we find five trading ports: Tunis-Goulette (the most important port for general merchandise and passengers), Sfax (specializing in the export of olive oil and phosphates), Bizerte and Menzel Bourguiba (petroleum trade and steel products), Sousse (playing the traditional role of transit point for the interior, and currently expanding) and the port of Gabes (an industrial port in the full sense of the term, closely linked to the region's chemical plants). In addition, there is the port of La Skhira, essentially a petroleum port. In 1985 the ports of Tunis-Goulette, Bizerte, Sousse, Sfax and Gabes handled a total of 12 million tons of cargo. This total includes hydrocarbons (nearly 4 million tons), bulk liquids (nearly 1 million tons), bulk solids (3.62 million tons), general merchandise (2.5 million tons) and grain (nearly 1 million tons). The port activity has involved various types of vessels, going all the way from "container transports" to "gassers," "oilers," "conventionals," and "roll on/roll offs."

Two administrative entities share responsibilities for the port system: in the first place the operation, upkeep and infrastructure expansion of the four maritime trade ports (Tunis-Goulette, Bizerte, Sousse and Sfax), are handled by the Office of National Ports of Tunisia (OPNT), a public-sector, autonomously financed body; while the government retains responsibility for all infrastructure projects at the two industrial and petroleum ports of Gabes and La Skhira.

Administration of the ports of Gabes is still entrusted to the OPNT. But do we know enough about the national ports office? How old is it? What is the precise extent of its jurisdiction?

OPNT: The Pivot

The OPNT was born in February 1965. Law Number 65-2 of 12 February 1985 established the Office (a public body of industrial-commercial character, capable of acting as a legal person and endowed with financial autonomy), giving it a mandate to insure the operation, upkeep and development of the then-existing ports (Bizerte, Tunis, La Goulette, Sousse and Sfax).

The law of 12 February 1985 was modified 7 years later by Law Number 72-5 of 15 February 1972. The following provision was added to Article 2: "The purpose of the Office is to insure the operation, upkeep and development of the trading ports of Bizerte, Menzel Bourguiba, Tunis, La Goulette, Sousse, Sfax and any other trading port for which it will be given responsibility by subsequent decree."

Nevertheless, according to Article 2, "the OPNT can be used to operate, on behalf of the government, any trading port it is asked to administer."

As one can see, OPNT manages and operates the lion's share of Tunisia's port infrastructure. The ports entrusted to OPNT can be grouped into two broad categories: traditional trading ports (Tunis-Goulette, Bizerte, Menzel Bourguiba, Sousse and Sfax), which serve as traditional transit points for the interior. These ports are thus directly linked to demand from the interior for current consumer goods and equipment goods. It might also be noted that the ports of Sfax and Bizerte, in addition to their primary commercial function, also serve an industrial function to a lesser extent.

Integrated Sites

At Sfax, the traffic generated by the industrial phosphate activity represents close to 50 percent of the overall tonnage handled by the port. In Bizerte, the oil refinery served by the port generates all by itself 40 percent of the total traffic logged. By contrast with these traditional commercial ports, one finds at Gabes an industrial port whose operations are closely tied to the chemical plants and which is involved in some industrial activity. The chemical complex at Gabes, located near the port, contains a series of units for the processing of phosphates and derivatives, as well as several manufacturing plants (cement works, brickyard, tile factory). The industrial complex built around the port of Gabes contains some 15 industrial production units and employs more than 3,000 people. This testifies to the importance of this industrial and maritime pole as a generator of activities. It serves as an example spurring the public authorities to plan for creation of new industrial ports, to use them to structure the space in a region.

Starting with the fact that several industrial maritime ports have a positive impact on their immediate environment and that they contribute effectively to the flourishing of human and economic activity, the government in its Sixth Plan (which is nearly over) consolidated the investment effort authorized in the preceding plans for port and maritime transport infrastructure. The investment allocation covered, inter alia, completion of expansion work on the ports of La Goulette, Sfax, Bizerte and Menzel Bourguiba, and the acquisition of some new ships (for transporting chemicals, among other purposes). The appropriation also specifically provided for studies on two big ports, Zarzis and Cap-Serrat, in connection with the implementation of the development programs for the Sud and Nord-Ouest regions.

The planned port of Zarzis is closely tied to development of the natural resources of the region (particularly the offshore natural gas), while the port of Cap-Serrat is linked to industrial projects which are over time being established on the site. Among these projects one might cite the chemical industry based on processing of phosphates to be extracted from Sra-Ouartane in the governorate of Kef. Meanwhile, there are plans to locate at the port of La Skhira a chemical fertilizer complex which will annually produce about 300,000 tons of phosphoric acid.

We note that construction work on the La Skhira complex was begun in July 1984 and that it should give the port of La Skhira a whole new look. In

effect, these new integrated industrial-port sites should make a considerable contribution to the economic and social advancement of the regions that receive them.

Focus on Tunisia's Port Infrastructure

Five maritime trade ports (Tunis-Goulette, Bizerte, Menzel Bourguiba, Sousse and Sfax); an industrial port (Gabes); an oil port at La Skhira, planned ports at Zarzis and Cap-Serrat. This is the sum of Tunisia's port infrastructure after three decades of development. Let us learn more about these poles of development.

Port of Tunis-Goulette

Though it is an administrative unity, the port of Tunis-Goulette is composed of two distinct parts: first, the port of Tunis, situated at the furthest extremity of the canal linking Goulette to Tunis and comprised of three docking basins; and second, the port of La Goulette, consisting of a canal-dock separating the port installations of the North Bank from those of the South Bank, and an exterior docking basin called "Port de Pêche."

Situated in the Gulf of Tunis, the port of La Goulette in 1985 handled 2,232,025 tons of merchandise. The port of Tunis during the same period recorded 454,401 tons.

Port of Sfax

Situated on the east coast of Tunisia, the port of Sfax, by the tonnage of products handled, is the biggest of Tunisia's maritime trading ports. In 1985 general traffic amounted to 3,662,282 tons of merchandise. This is the port of embarkation for the largest portion of the country's bulk solids. Phosphates are of course the primary product.

The expansion of the port of Sfax, taking place against a background of continually increasing traffic, should make it easy to absorb growing demand.

The port of Sfax has three 10.5-meter anchoring berths for the handling of traditional ships, a dredged carrying berth, and a service pier situated northeast of the sailing ship basin.

Close by the port are the phosphates company SIAPE, the Sfax-Gafsa railway, and the Tunisian phosphates company of Jebel M'dhilla.

Port of Bizerte

Located on the northern side of the Tunisian littoral, the port of Bizerte includes the outer harbor, the canal port (separated by a mobile bridge), the old port and the bay of Sebra.

The outer harbor is mainly dedicated to oilers. Overall traffic to Bizerte in 1985 came to 3,163,399 tons.

Port of Menzel Bourguiba

This is an artificial port which is located at the far end of Lake Bizerte and consists of a northern jetty and a southern jetty. This port, which is also located near the arsenal, can accommodate small ships awaiting repairs, but does not have major commercial potential.

Port of Sousse

Located on the eastern side of the littoral, the port of Sousse consists of one principal docking basin, a sailing ship basin and a small fishing-boat basin.

The primary basin has three docking berths, one of which is reserved for the embarkation of the Alfa and the Cellulose.

Overall traffic at Sousse in 1985 was 564,013 tons of merchandise.

Port of Gabes

The port of Gabes, covering 80 hectares, is enclosed by two breakwaters with a passageway 350 meters wide between them. We find an outer basin, an inner basin, a 600-meter-long pier to accommodate ships and a mineral pier with special facilities for loading and unloading ammonia products and acids.

This port, which is right in the middle of the Gulf of Gabes, about 22 miles south of the oil port of La Skhira, handled a total of 1,959,891 tons of merchandise in 1985.

9516

CSO : 4519/101

ISRAEL

BATTLE OVER HEBRON'S BEYT HADASSA REVIEWED

Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 14 Mar 86 pp 8-9

[Article by Pinhas 'Anbery: "Seventy Days of G'amil Dundis"]

[Text] Who approves of the plans for construction in Hebron? Why is Fuad called "Haman the wicked?" Why must shoppers at an Arab store remove their shoes? Why are the signs in the streets of Hebron in three languages? These are questions which arise around the struggle over "Beyt Hadassa," which is the struggle over the splendor of Hebron. The rules of the game are being written by us, but there is no reason to be proud of them.

Five years ago the mayor of Hebron at that time, Mustaf Natasha, turned to the chairman of the high committee for planning and building in Judea and Samaria with a routine request. The municipality of Hebron wanted to tear down the old town hall in the center of town (the municipal government had, meanwhile, moved to a new building in the northern part of town) in order to build in its place a large structure where the town council would rent offices and would open a middle eastern restaurant worthy of the name on the roof. The chairman of the committee, Shlomo Moskovitz, gave the mayor the runaround and finally announced that permission would not be granted unless the council took care of a parking lot. The town council worked on preparing a plan for a parking lot and presented it to the planning committee, but there was again a delay in getting an answer. Finally, Natasha met with Moskovitz to get to the bottom of the problem.

"Who owns the land where the parking lot will be built?" Moskovitz asked. "It belongs to the city council," answered Natasha. "No," said Moskovitz. "Whose was it before that?" "The city council's," the mayor said. "And even before that," asked the Israeli official. "The city council's," Natasha answered again. "An even before that?" "The town council's." Natasha did not understand the meaning of the questions. "No!" said Moskovitz. "The parcel belonged to the Jews!" The permit for the plans of the city council of Hebron was not granted.

In that same year, 1981, on March 21, an Arab upholsterer, G'amil Dundis, arrived at his shop behind Beyt Hadassa. To his surprise, he found the contents of his shop thrown out in the street, a ruffian settler standing at the door of the shop not letting the stunned G'amil go inside. G'amil

saw that the settlers had made a big hole in the ceiling through which they had come in through Beyt Hadassa to his shop. He, of course, protested, and his stubbornness in trying to enter his own shop cost him several broken teeth and a twisted arm.

At that time the regional commander of Judea and Samaria was Binyamin Ben Eliezer ("Fuad"). He was horrified by what he saw. To bring the settlers to court seemed a bit much because the Likud government was at the peak of its power, and the chief of staff, Rafal, gave the settlers formal backing. But Fuad ordered the settlers to return the shop to its owners. He also had the roof repaired at army expense with reinforced concrete to make it more difficult for the settlers to knock it down a second time. Because this happened around the time of Purim, Fuad was nicknamed "Haman the wicked."

Five years passed, but the years have not made things better for Dundis. Before, he had dealings with the settlers and the IDF defended him; now, he has to deal with the IDF itself. About 70 days ago, Dundis and two other merchants were called into the office of the military ruler and were asked to leave Beyt Hadassa and go elsewhere. The military rule was prepared to help them, but G'amil and his friends refused. The next day, it became clear that now they were in worse trouble than they ever had been with the settlers. The military rule had set up a gate very close to their shops and had placed guards at the gate. All passersby, including the shopkeepers themselves, had to identify themselves just as is done at a military installation, and undergo a thorough body search with the clear intention of pressuring Dundis and his friends to leave.

There is a thread connecting the troubles of G'amil Dundis and the incident of 5 years earlier concerning the permit for the Hebron council. Five years ago in Hebron, a struggle was going on over the Judaization of the city, and now the struggle is no longer being carried out by a weird marginal group which is an extremist group even within Gush-Emunim itself, but rather by the State of Israel in all its glory. At a time when Prime Minister Shimon Peres is talking about the "enhancement of authority," and in Nablus (? unclear print in newspaper) the first sacrifice is made on this new political path, the State of Israel is conducting an entirely different policy in Hebron. This is not the enhancement of the authority of the residents and the strengthening of their position, but the opposite--their eviction and their being pushed out of the center of their town in order to make Hebron Jewish. And if the center of Hebron becomes Jewish, no moderate political interpretation will survive.

The Shops--A Security Risk

When we tried to get answers as to why the government is oppressing Dundis and his friends, a military spokesman explained that security forces had come to the conclusion that the shops at the bottom of Beyt Hadassa represent a security risk and must, therefore, be evacuated. "Imagine if they set off powerful explosives under the shops. All of Beyt Hadassa would collapse!" This was what the military spokesmen said. About a month ago, a senior IDF officer tried to sell this explanation to a group in the Knesset who were

coming to inspect the condition of the merchants at Beyt Hadassa. It was painful to watch an IDF officer get tangled in his words explaining the unexplainable in the face of the professional questioning on the part of the group members two of whom, Ron Cohen and Mordekhai Baron, are reserve officers ranking no lower than him. But even without being a security expert, one can see how flimsy the "security" argument is. First of all, it was not only the shops of G'amil and his two neighbors which the army fenced off, but an additional six nearby shops. The latter are not Beyt Hadassa shops, and the military ruler did not ask them to take their belongings and move. What is the security problem there and why do they have to suffer? One must examine the security mentality of Hebron in order to understand. The six neighbors were made to suffer in order to put added pressure on Dundis and his friends to leave. And if it is said that there is no refuting the security arguments with regard to the three shopkeepers in Beyt Hadassa, then there is no explanation with regard to the six neighbors except for the arbitrary actions of men of power.

In order to hurl Beyt Hadassa from its foundations, it would be necessary to bring into Dundis' and his friends' shops huge quantities of explosives on the order of magnitude of an infernal machine (especially after the special ceiling that Fuad repaired). But the kind of security search does not indicate that they are looking for infernal machines or else why are they asking that everyone take off their shoes? The settlers at Beyt Hadassa can sleep soundly if the danger is that terrorists will pile up explosives the size of shoelaces at G'amil Dundis' shop. It will take hundreds of years at that rate to collect enough explosives to destroy the building.

Removal of shoes is an act of stripping which especially bothers the Arabs. And the shopkeepers keep coming back to this particular issue. The soldiers are not sensitive to the fact that women are also expected to take off their shoes publicly.

Iharahim Dundis, G'amil's son, says: "Every time I pass the barricade, the soldiers order me to take off my shoes. I have thought of going barefoot as a way of dealing with the problem...."

When minor harrassments do not help, they switch to major ones. It turns out that the placement of explosives is not a fear for the future and, apparently, verified information has been received that Dundis and his friends have managed to smuggle in explosives, despite the elite IDF guards, and are about to blow up the building. Devices were brought into the shops quickly to detect explosive materials, and the merchants were ordered to bring out their belongings and undergo a thorough search. Fortunately, nothing was found.

The harrassments did not cease, and the weave of the material continued to unravel. After the visit from the MKs, the meaning of the expression "security risk" broadened substantially. After the MKs were disturbed by the sight of merchants looking at them helplessly from behind the gate, security forces sent out the word: It is forbidden to talk across the gate.

We felt some of the spirit of "security considerations" Hebron style ourselves. Photographer Bo'az Lenner, journalist Mikhael Vidlanski (writer for a network of newspapers with wide circulation in the United States), and I learned, when we returned home, that our simple visit had been considered by the forces in Hebron to be a provocation, and they were considering whether to take steps against us.

Our visit to Hebron was the most exciting security incident that day.

Tourists Who Come and Do Not Go

When we went to Beyt Hadassa, we got a sense of what combat units in the IDF spend their time doing. At a time when the prime minister and the northern commander are shouting about the real security risks on the Syrian border, an IDF combat officer is giving orders to soldiers guarding a big house (the building next to Beyt Hadassa) as to how to behave when an Arab worker arrives to go to work for the Horowitz family who lives there.

We asked Avino'am Horovitz from the house to explain the plans against the Arab merchants of Beyt Hadassa. He does not think anything is planned. Anyway, "we are being extremely generous in letting those murderers stay." And he immediately pulls out an old map proving Jewish ownership over the whole place, ownership going back to 1945 and the Sephardic community called "Magen Avot." He will soon give the map to the appropriate authorities to get Dundis and his neighbors (who also have good documents of their own) out of their shops.

Whereas the security forces are very sensitive to the security risk of Harfad and his friends, they do not seem the least bit disturbed by the open support for the Jewish underground blossoming in Beyt Hadassa. Hero of the underground, Ze'ev Haver "Zambish," is a respected man in Beyt Hadassa. He is head of the "society for the renewal of Jewish settlement in Hebron," the society responsible for Beyt Hadassa. When slogans praising the Palestinian terrorist organizations are smeared on the walls, they are immediately erased, and rightly so. But no one erases the slogans supporting the Jewish terrorist organization; those do not worry the security forces.

The struggle at Beyt Hadassa is a struggle over the Judaization of Hebron. There are not only internal implications in this. The struggle extends to the entire region and finds expression in the way that the Israeli mayor, Zamir Shemesh, runs the city. To begin with, it should be noted that, by and large, the Arab residents think well of Zamir Shemesh. Although he raised taxes substantially, he had no choice because the municipality under his leadership does not get any support from across the border as it did under Qawasme and Natasha. But Zamir Shemesh does not only serve the Arabs. He serves the settlers as well, and it should be understood that the settlers are strongly opposed to his being replaced by an Arab mayor.

There is a debate in Israel concerning the Jewish presence in Hebron. Shemesh has contributed modestly but not insignificantly to the subject. His first step, when he became mayor, was to hang up a big sign in Hebrew,

and, as is appropriate in a "mixed town," he filled the town with street signs in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. Like the IDF soldiers in Beyt Hadassa, Zamir Shemesh is also following in bigger footsteps than his own--those of the settlers. The first ones to hang Hebrew street signs in Hebron were the Beyt Shneerson settlers near Beyt Hadassa. They did not like the Arabic "Shalala Street" and preferred to live on "King David Street." This was illegal since the municipality of Mustafa Natasha had not approved of the change, but in those days no one bothered about such small things. Zamir Shemesh approved the name chosen by the settlers after the fact and, apparently, favored the principle of the thing.

Zamir Shemesh denies any political significance to filling the town with Hebrew street signs. As far as he is concerned, Hebron is a tourist town. Since many Israeli tourists visit it, they need signs to help them find their way around. He says that Arab merchants who want to attract Israeli customers also hang up Hebrew signs in their shops. Probably the mayor is really concerned about Israeli tourism in Hebron, but he does not take into account the fact that some of these tourists are the kind who come and never leave.

The Israeli mayor is not only concerned about tourism, but also about traffic of Hebron residents to the surrounding villages, especially the villages near Qiryat-Arba. For this reason, he is now building a road to the town which will also serve the traffic going to the villages. The residents of Hebron will pay for part of the cost of the road from the town budget, and the other half will come from the civil administration fund.

In recent years, the settlers have almost stopped bothering their Arab neighbors. When incidents do occur, they are the exceptions rather than the rule. But this is because they do not have to. They can be the good guys, and someone else does their dirty work.

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ISRAEL

IDF ENCOURAGES EVANGELISM; POLITICAL SLANT NOTED

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Mar 86 pp 12-13

[Article by Yoram Yarqoni: "God's Army"]

[Text] At Shapir Center, on the way to Ashqelon, a phenomenon is developing which should be noted. Religious youths are being taught to believe that it is their job to spread the word about orthodox Judaism throughout the army. The IDF is giving them the means to do so in the form of a special military boarding school for religious cadets. The teachers at this institution are not only teaching their students religious laws, but also the political beliefs of Rabbi Druckman. It is worth remembering which key IDF posts the graduates of these military schools attain.

About a month ago, on Tu Bishvat, five students from the national religious military school at Or-Etzion got on a bus which left from the courtyard of the school to join hundreds of people participating in a planting operation. It was organized by Gush-Emunim among the Samaritan settlements with the slogan of "Come plant a tree in Samaria." It was said that other students from the school would have participated, but that budget problems prevented this at the last minute.

This was not the first time that students from the military academy at Or-Etzion have participated in activities organized by Gush-Emunim. Last Independence Day, all the students went out on a "March on the Green." A few of the students who tried, for personal reasons, to get out of going on the march, were called in for a talk with the head of the yeshiva. He told them that participation in this march was a requirement of being a student at the military academy. The march took place with the slogan, "There is no green line. Everything is green." Participants in the march were being called upon to stand in the breach in opposition to the political meetings being held to determine the future of Judea and Samaria as well as to strengthen the nation and its leaders with the emphasis on the idea that peace is not contradictory with a greater Israel. At the end of that day, the marchers met together at Qarne-Shomron to mark the tenth anniversary of the renewal of Jewish settlement in Samaria. Vice Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Yitzhaq Shamir and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning David Levy honored by the presence those gathered for the ceremony.

If they wanted to, these yeshiva students, like other marchers, could have signed up to live in Judea and Samaria. But they have a different task within the system of the national religious group for the land of Israel and for the heart of the people of Israel. The students at the academy have a job that is viewed as no less important by the leaders of the group. As future officers, they must work to turn the IDF into a more fundamentalist, nationalistic, and religious army--an army which will have no doubts about what it is fighting for. Under the influence of its teachers, the students will try to change the army, improve its moral atmosphere, and remove ideological doubts from it.

Head of the school, Major Pinhas Na'aman, said in the weekly BAMAHAANE that his goal is for the IDF to eventually have a religious chief of staff, and that the school is preparing its students with that in mind. MK Rabbi Haim Druckman, head of the yeshiva and of the military school, agrees. He sees no problem with students belonging to the army and also involved with the political activity of Gush-Emunim. "Whoever thinks that whatever is connected to the land of Israel is opposed to the IDF has a problem," says Rabbi Druckman.

The military academy at Or-Etzion has just completed seven energetic years of activity during which yeshiva students were prepared to be officers. As early as 1974, certain forces within the defense ministry and within the division of religious education in the ministry of education began to discuss the possibility of establishing a military school as a counterbalance to the secular military schools in Haifa and Tel Aviv. Social and political conditions at that time did not allow the idea to be carried out. The subject was again brought up for discussion following the political upheaval in 1977. The appointments of Zevulun Hammer as minister of education and Rafael Eytan as chief of staff brought about a decision in 1979 to establish a military-religious school. Rafal decided to close down the military school at Hertzliya High School in Tel Aviv and to establish in its place a religious military school operating within the framework of the Or-Etzion High School in Shapir Center (Qastina) on the way to Ashqelon.

The acting principal of the yeshiva high school, Rabbi Yosef Kafir, says that Or-Etzion yeshiva was chosen to absorb the military school because of its nationalistic approach. Most of the yeshiva students were recruited into the army, and the academy was considered to be the conduit for the high schools in the realm of defense actualization.

The school was known not only because most of its students joined the army, Or-Etzion yeshiva is one of the three banner schools of the religious-nationalist public and of Bnei-Aqiva. Like Nahalim yeshiva near Petah-Tiqva and the yeshiva of Merkaz HaRav in Jerusalem, Or-Etzion also preserves the ideological educational line which stems from the doctrine of Rabbi Kook. The educators at the yeshiva, as well as its students, identify completely with the notion of a greater Israel and with the Gush-Emunim movement. During the period when the devotees of a greater Israel fought against the Camp David agreements and against the withdrawal from Sinai, yeshiva students went in droves, led by Rabbi Haim Druckman, down to Yamit to settle and to be

part of the opposition of its settlers to evacuation. The involvement of the yeshiva in political life did not begin during the withdrawal from Sinai. The oldtimers from the yeshiva tell that in 1974, during the time of Gush-Emunim's struggle with Rabin's government, most of the students from Or-Etzion left their desks and went out to demonstrate against the government out of identification with the illegal settlement in Sabastiya. The pervasive ideological line at the yeshiva is shaped powerfully by Rabbi Haim Druckman who is the representative of the extreme right nationalist-religious movement and representative of Morasha in the Knesset.

"A.", a graduate of the second graduating class of the military academy, now serving in one of the combat units of the IDF, says: "At Or-Etzion the ideological baggage given to students is greater than at any other yeshiva. In contrast to other similar schools, there are many discussions about ideology, and the school drills into the students values connected with the objective of the people of Israel in the land of Israel. It is my feeling and the feeling of my friends that studies are not the most important thing at the yeshiva; politics is the main thing."

Or-Etzion yeshiva was established 25 years ago with the goal of preserving the legacy of the combat and faith of the settlements of Gush-Etzion. Like the people of Gush-Etzion who, during the War of Independence, risked their lives to stand up to the Jordanian Legion, so also the students at the yeshiva are trained to be strict about their Jewish heritage and to be prepared for self-sacrifice for the sake of the land of Israel and the Jewish people.

Religious studies go from early in the morning till late at night, every day. Weekends become a focus for sharing concepts whose goal is to develop the character of students in a religious/nationalistic direction. The students get together for informal discussions with the heads of the yeshiva and its educators about current issues facing Israeli society and about their spiritual significance. The climax of this conceptual marathon is the talk given by the head of the yeshiva, MK Rabbi Haim Druckman. Every Saturday night Rabbi Druckman presents the portion of the week as a starting point for various conceptual interpretations (religious/nationalistic in nature) of the events of the previous week. While the subjects which come under discussion vary somewhat, they are always anchored in three principles: the land of Israel, the people of Israel, and the Torah. According to students, Rabbi Druckman's political/ideological approach sets the educational tone of the yeshiva and of the military academy. Or-Etzion was the first yeshiva to initiate the establishment of a specific goal for Israeli studies.

"A.", graduate of the first class of the military academy, who serves in one of IDF's field units, sees Rabbi Druckman as an outstanding personality whose status is similar to the president of a country. On the Sabbath, tells "B.", Rabbi Druckman carries on discussions through which his belief in the idea of a greater Israel is expressed. "C.", who finished military school about a year ago, tells how in the Sabbath talks, Rabbi Druckman usually attacks politicians on the left and criticizes their eagerness to encourage the peace process.

At Or-Etzion, the motivations of the Jewish underground are understood. Still, the yeshiva educators headed by Rabbi Kafir have emphasized to their students that, although the underground people operated out of desperation, it is forbidden to take the law into one's own hands. "A." says that the teachers were behind the underground in principle, but did not go along with the idea of blowing up the bus with its Arab passengers. Nonetheless, students of the academy took part in fundraising activities for the underground. "D.", who left the school, says that one of the reasons for his decision was the lack of tolerance in the school for different political viewpoints. "Students who were opposed to demonstrating in support of freeing the imprisoned underground people were ostracized from the community," says "D."

The head of the academy, Major Pinhas Na'aman, prefers to educate his students under greenhouse conditions rather than revealing them to the public at large. At first, the academy was housed in the high school building of the yeshiva. About two years ago, it moved to a lovely new building. In fact, an all-purpose military camp was built for it, but the only evidence that there is a military base subject to all the military rules right next to the yeshiva of Or-Etzion is the border guard post and the tall fence between the two institutions. In the yeshiva courtyard, it is hard to tell the difference between the yeshiva students and the students of the academy. The academy students spend most of their time in their studies at the yeshiva. In the morning there are religious studies, in the afternoon high school studies, and in their free time there are army classes on weapons and topography. During vacations, the students go through intensive military training, navigation exercises, training under fire, a course in parachuting, etc. Despite the nice fit between the two institutions, Rabbi Kafir is disturbed by the close proximity of a military base where there are also secular soldiers. The army tries to staff the command with religious officers.

The fundamental debate about the establishment of a special military academy for the orthodox is not well liked by the heads of the yeshiva and the academy. They view their training and education of orthodox officers as a very important goal and the beginning of a process whereby the religious-nationalist population can leave its mark on the army. The head of the academy, Major Na'aman, said to BAMAHAANE that throughout the years, a religious youth could be accepted in any of the regular military academies without giving up the values of his religion. And, since this is the period when the personality of the young person is crystallizing, and his future self-image is being formed, it is important to give orthodox youth a lot of encouragement to continue on their path.

The former chief of staff, MK Rafael Eytan, agrees with this argument. He says that the potential of the orthodox for becoming officers was not realized until the establishment of the academy. Youths wearing skullcaps were not allowed to sign up at military academies because of their desire to continue to observe religious traditions. Rafal does not accept the possibility that the pre-army separation in education is likely to lead to a separation between the secular and the religious people in the army as well. And, indeed, most of the students at the academy admitted that they would never have chosen to study at a secular military academy.

Rabbi Kafir sees the main significance of training orthodox officers in terms of the support that they are likely to give other orthodox soldiers who are running into problems trying to preserve their orthodox way of life during their army service. According to him, the phenomenon is known in the army of religious soldiers removing their skullcaps because of social pressure. "It is up to the orthodox officers to watch over the rights of prayer, to be strict about dietary laws, the lighting of the Sabbath candles, keeping the Sabbath, and other general staff orders concerning religion," says Rabbi Kafir. This is not the only goal set for these officers to be trained at the academy. The teachers emphasize the sense of a religious mission and the conceptual truth surrounding them as they serve in the IDF.

"G.", graduate of the first class of the religious military academy, now serving in one of the field units, is not satisfied with the army which he serves. "There is a difference between a Jewish army and an Israeli army. The army as it is now is not ideal. Its moral level is low, the values of the soldiers are weak, and the secularists are on the wrong path. They do not know why or for what they are fighting. As a religious officer, my main goal will be to bring soldiers closer to religious values so that eventually they will all repent. I joined the unit I am in now in order to meet a broader segment of people, in order to be influential on a larger scale." This goal is emphasized by the teachers of the academy. The head of the academy encourages his students to join combat units in which they can influence many soldiers. Major Na'aman is not pleased with students of the academy who prefer to serve in small elite units.

The academy students, like their teachers, are convinced that they can influence and alter the values by which the IDF operates. "Secular Zionism today suffers from a lack of deep-rootedness," says Rabbi Kafir. "This problem is expressed in the phenomenon of the 'little head.' In contrast to this, the religious-nationalist youth are headed in the right direction, and our path proves itself."

The future officers want to see a more religious army. They are convinced that the important thing is to rely on the foundations of religion and faith. "Getting closer to the sources is the ideal situation towards which we must strive at any cost," they say. Lawlessness, thievery, lack of personal integrity--they believe that these phenomena can be eradicated by changing social and cultural life and by doing away with the contempt people have for their neighbors. They see in the religious education at the academy in Or-Etzion an opening for the attainment of the desired goal. The more religious officers there are in the army who can restore secular soldiers to their roots, the more the moral and ideological level will rise. They see the army as a focal point in Israeli society, and they see a change in it leading to changes in other social centers. Their ultimate objective is the establishment of a state run by Jewish law. The students at the academy say that their teachers emphasize to them the subject of repentance and tell them: "Be aware that you are representing the religious sector in the army and that you, therefore, have a grave responsibility."

"All this," promises Rabbi Kafir, "will be done gradually and not by means of orders and coercion. The word religion frightens many people. I speak, therefore, of values. I am in favor of talks and lectures to soldiers so that they can get to know the values of religion. I am speaking of principles appropriate even for those who do not wear skullcaps. These principles need to be applied in our daily lives and made a part of our way of thinking. A discussion about the portion of the week and its laws as they apply to our daily life cannot hurt anyone." Rabbi Kafir's ideal is a more religious army and a situation in which the society as a whole repents. The means for attaining this longed-for goal is gradual persuasion.

"L." finished his studies at the academy about 6 months ago. He chose to put off his recruitment into the army and to study at an advanced yeshiva for 2 years. This is a special privilege accorded only to the students at the military academy at Or-Etzion. The heads of the yeshiva and the academy encourage their students to choose this path and to delay their entry into the army so that they can benefit from a deeper Tora education and carry out their job in the army more successfully. "L." is an idealist, steeped in a deep religious faith, sure of his path, without any doubts about the important job assigned to him. In his opinion, there is a difference between the secular soldier and the religious one. The secular soldier is fighting to live and to defend his home while the religious soldier is fulfilling, through his military service, the commandment to conquer the land of Israel. Military service is, therefore, a primary value of religious faith. "To watch over the land of Israel, our heritage--there is no greater commandment than this. It is the greatest commandment. I hold to this," says "L." His motivation to fight, therefore, is, according to him, greater than that of other soldiers. "L.'s" words are drawn directly from the educational substance of the yeshiva and from the atmosphere prevalent there.

As for "H.", who is about to be sent to a course for officers, military service is an additional step in the process of redemption. According to him, the establishment of the State of Israel and of its army are important signs of the realization of the process of redemption at the end of which the third holy temple will be built.

With regard to what the students and graduates of the military academy said, I asked Rabbi Kafir if their education did not represent political indoctrination which would, of necessity, extend to the army and spoil its neutral position. Rabbi Kafir has a different viewpoint. "It is customary to turn every value connected with the nationalist-religious sector into a political value. Religion for me is an ideal which can make any society better. And the work of Gush-Emunim is not political, but primarily a matter of settlement. And after all," Rabbi Kafir says with some anger, "Why don't they find fault with the existence of the military school near the high school in Haifa?"

And This Is Only the Beginning

Major General Amnon Shahaq, Major General Amir Drori, Major General Matan Vilnay, Major General 'Amran Mitzna, Brigadier General (Reservist)

Ya'akov Even--these are some of the graduates of military academies in Haifa and Tel Aviv who are determining to which senior IDF posts the graduates of these institutions will go. Alongside them and under them, many other officers are serving who are graduates of the military academies at various levels of command.

The military academy at Or-Etzion will also make its contribution to the development of the officers' corps in coming years. The academy is still young, and its graduates are only starting out on their careers in the army, but as more and more classes graduate, the stream of students joining the army will grow. At present, 72 students are studying at the academy in four classes. Whereas in the first year, there were only 18 students, this year there are 40 new students. So far, 20 students have graduated from the academy. They will become officers and will be absorbed by various field units. This year, another class of 15 will graduate.

You Will Be an Officer for Us

We can learn about the potential influence that graduates of the religious academy can have on the soldiers under them from the experiences of "J." who just completed a course for officers after finishing his studies at the academy.

"J." began his army service as a soldier in an armor unit. His comrades in the unit were secularists. When he got to the unit, he requested from his commanding officers that they carry out all the orders of the general staff with regard to religion. "J." could not tolerate the situation in his unit wherein the Jewish dietary laws were not kept at all. He made all the dishes in the kitchen kosher and asked his commanding officers that they make certain that meat and milk be strictly separated. He was not comfortable with the fact that soldiers smoked and listened to the radio on the Sabbath. He did not force his opinion on them, but he did let them know of his own sensitivity in this issue, and they responded by putting out their cigarettes and turning off the radio when he came by. One Sabbath he discovered that his comrades were working on tanks. He requested that they stop desecrating the Sabbath. The commanders agreed and the soldiers were happy. They thought they had gotten out of a job. But after the Sabbath, they had to complete their work into the small hours of the night.

Now that "J." has become an officer, he says that he will try to influence those under his command to follow in his footsteps. He is very aware of the power of his influence by virtue of being an officer and commander. "It pains me that soldiers in the army do not believe in the greater Israel and are willing to give it up for a peace agreement. I plan to change that, says "J."

Rabbi Druckman: There Is No Conflict

According to MK Haim Druckman, there is no conflict between being an MK and a political personage and being head of the yeshiva and the military academy.

"I have been head of the yeshiva since the 1960's, even before I became a member of the Knesset," he says, "and my educational direction is known to all. I initiated the establishment of the academy before my election to the Knesset. Furthermore, as an educator, I work to give expression to the educational direction to which I am committed. The important issue is the extent to which I am suitable for the educational job and not whether I am a member of Knesset and which political movement I represent."

Ron Kohen: I Do Not Want To Command Them

"The military-religious academy is a serious phenomenon. We are speaking of a military academy supported ideologically by a political body with representation in the Knesset, identified with Gush-Emunim, at whose head stands MK Rabbi Haim Druckman. Druckman with his dual position lends military legitimacy to his political ideas. Up to now, the army has succeeded in maintaining a neutral position vis-a-vis all the political and social upheavals in Israeli society. Every institution connected with the army must remain objective and neutral without ties to any political body whatsoever.

"In the ideological-religious approach of the teachers and students of the academy, there is a demand for a basic change in values in the army. They want the Israeli Defense Forces to become an 'army of God.' The entry of graduates of the academy into the ranks of officers of the IDF is likely to change the army.

"Since their motivating force is an extremist religious mission, I as unit commander in the reserves, would not want to command an officer with such a world view. I would never know for sure how he would function in a situation where my orders went against his religious values."

IDF Spokesman: Not To Uncover

Military academies of the IDF are run as military educational devices, according to the heads of the army. The academy at Or-Etzion is a joint project of the IDF and the yeshiva at Or-Etzion. The policy of the communication survey of the military academy is to limit as much as possible exposure of the academy, in general and its students, in particular to the media, especially because of their age.

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JORDAN

REGIONAL ECONOMIC ROLE REVIEWED BY CHAMBERS CHAIRMAN

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Mar 86 pp 50-51

[Interview with Hamdi al-Tabba', Chambers of Commerce Chairman: "Jordan Can Play Regional Economic Role"; date and place not specified]

[Text] For Jordan, 1985 was a year that brought with it solutions to problems arising out of recession. The year 1986 is one of fruition and crystallization of those solutions and adjustment of such as were unsuitable, according to Hamdi al-Tabba', Federation of Chambers of Commerce chairman. Mr. al-Tabba' however, is of the opinion that efforts should be concentrated so as to make Jordan a regional center for economic activities in the area. The interview ran as follows:

[Question] How would you assess the economic situation in Jordan over the preceding year and what are your expectations for 1986?

[Al-Tabba'] Jordan's economy went through a number of phases in 1985, the most important of which was characterized by the government's efforts to alleviate the effects of recession. Action was taken either to amend customs tariffs or protect several industries and grant export incentives in the hope of exporting a greater volume of Jordanian manufacturers to increase the country's foreign exchange earnings. The government signed two protocols for the purpose, one with Egypt and the other with Iraq. Similar protocols are being drafted for signature with a number of Arab States.

The government has also set up a corporation to market agricultural produce and has deregulated farm prices to encourage farmers to increase their output. The government also acted to strengthen the contracting industry, for the first time, allowing Jordanian contractors to bid for tenders. It has taken steps as regards insurance companies, encouraging amalgamation, and initiated similar action in the industrial sector. In short, 1985 was a remedial year. The Federation of Chambers of Commerce made an effective contribution in decision-making and offering consultancy services and advice.

However, these measures need time for their effects to make their appearance, but we can say that 1985 saw a lower rate of inflation even if measures limiting imports have not yet borne fruit as is evidenced by the fact that their volume

remains unchanged. In any case, such solutions are unlikely to produce results until sufficient time has elapsed, and if they prove useless will have to be further crystallized and adjusted. As the prime minister said, it should be borne in mind that the Federation of Chambers of Commerce differed in its opinion concerning certain measures, although the general framework envisaged is to strengthen the private sector.

As regards 1986, we expect that the trading sectors will adjust to the measures taken and that heavy industries will successfully weather their crisis, with circumstances improving for the cement industry in particular following amalgamation of the Jordan Cement and Southern Cement Companies and increased export of manufacturers with the signature of the trade protocols with Egypt and Iraq.

However, there is one important issue that might arise in 1986, namely the repatriation of Jordanians working abroad. This will deprive the country of one of its financial resources as well as raise the rate of unemployment. We might point out in this respect that the Ministry of Labour has taken a number of steps to organize the labor market in Jordan including restricting civil service employment to Jordanians. Hence, it is expected that the country's foreign exchange revenues will decline this year, which is borne out by the fact that Arab assistance is still volatile although Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are continuing to fulfill their obligations to Jordan.

On the whole, I think that as far as putting the problem of economic slowdown on the right track towards a solution is concerned, 1986 will be a better year than 1985.

[Question] What are the problems facing the private sector and what are the demands that it is seeking to achieve?

[Al-Tabba'] As representatives of the private sector we met with the prime minister and the ministers concerned several times and on various occasions during which lengthy discussions and conversations were held.

The trading sector feels that Jordan could well become a regional trading center for the area since we have exceptional elements, a sound foundation, a huge fleet of overland transport vehicles, an outstanding air carrier, a growing banking and financial market and, more important, political stability, not to mention the two free zones in al-Zarqa' and al-aqabah; we are working to the same end. As a matter of fact, Jordanian companies with a regional orientation have already been established and we have been able to attract foreign companies to use Jordan as the base from which to launch their operations. Industry is open to Arab investors. Any Arab can set up a plant without Jordanian participation. This all indicates that we are in a position to assume a regional economic stance. As far as agriculture is concerned the potential for expansion has been proven and we can thus meet our requirements for wheat and grain. The Jordanian government will be offering fallow land acreage to farmers at token prices, and we hope that they will begin tilling them this year. Their output will help us reduce wheat imports which currently amount to 400,000 tons a year, besides providing employment

opportunities for thousands of workers helping us halt the flow of urban migration.

As regards the "ghors grabens", the Jordan Valley Authority is carrying out a number of development projects including extending the Eastern Ghor canal which will increase irrigated acreage and enable establishment of an agricultural cropping pattern serving to provide market requirements the whole year round without resulting in any surpluses. Should such conditions be available it will be possible to increase the scope of agro-industries.

[Question] Was not the protection accorded industry in 1985 and early 1986 at the expense of the trading sector?

[Al-Tabba'] Frankly...we have no objection to support and tariff protections for deserving industries, but it is not in the country's best interests to protect and support unsteady industries at the expense of the consumer and the treasury. As we mentioned to the prime minister during our meetings with him, as a trading sector we do not believe in "close-ended protection" of industries that produce at a high cost exceeding manufacturing costs in the Gulf States and which are uncompetitive at home and abroad. We are all for carefully studied protectionism that leads to prosperous industry and commerce at the same time, but are against protecting sick industries.

[Question] Do you expect increased trade exchange between Jordan and Syria following the positive development of relations between both countries? What will the private sector's role be in this respect? Is there any collaboration between yourselves and the Syrian Chambers of Commerce?

[Al-Tabba'] First of all I would like to point out that our relations with the Syrian Chambers of Commerce have never been suspended. Last year we met with their officers twice, apart from meeting during conferences and other Arab occasions.

Syria is the natural market for Jordanian products, particularly farm produce from the agricultural "ghors grabens". Unfortunately, there has been no opportunity for Jordanian products to find their way into Syria. We hope that the detente (rapprochement) between the two countries will enable the marketing of our farm produce without placing too much reliance on exporting our industrial output. The Syrians have benefited from our domestic banking services and can substitute Jordanian banking facilities for those offered by the Lebanese banks, by opening their documentary credits through Jordanian banks for example, or using the port of Aqabah for delivery of their goods from the Far East. There are several joint companies such as the Jordanian-Syrian Overland Transport Company and al-Abyad Cement Factory in the joint free zone. A carpet factory is shortly to be set up in the same zone and we hope to be able to establish joint ventures between the private sectors of both countries.

[Question] Is there any draft trade protocol between the two countries?

[Al-Tabba'] The matter has not yet been considered, although we do believe the best solution is to separate trade from any political problems. Any such

enterprise however, will be of limited value unless it includes a provision facilitating the sale of our agricultural output in the Syrian market.

[Question] What impact is the Israeli-American free zone likely to have on the economies of the Arab States, and on Jordan specifically?

[Al-Tabba'] We were the first to raise the matter, being fully aware of the dimensions of the project which will open up to Israeli industry the American market as a whole and enable export of its products to the Arab countries in the guise of American goods. We have submitted papers, books, and memoranda on the subject to the meeting of Arab Federations of Chambers of Commerce, the Jordanian delegation insisting at the meeting that its memorandum be discussed item by item and submitted as a recommendation to the Arab Governments for adoption.

[Box on p 51] Chambers of Commerce Federation Memorandum

The following is a summary of the memorandum introduced by the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce to Jordanian Prime Minister Zayid al-Rifa'i, specifying the demands of Jordan's trading sector:

The memorandum contains a number of proposals relating to economic policies and measures to be taken by the government in the short term in order to accelerate economic activity in Jordan and stir it out of its more than two year old stagnation before its adverse effects are exacerbated. The proposals concentrate on three main directions in which the government can prod other sectors and economic entities to stimulate economic activity:

1 -Expansionary fiscal policies which the government undertakes in pursuance:

a--Pay all or part of its financial outstandings promptly over a limited period of time to inject some liquidity into the economy.

b--Promptly implement, or advance the date of implementation of a number of projects, particularly those featuring strong interrelationships with a maximum number of economic sectors with high surplus value and the ability to employ large amounts of Jordanian labor. In this respect we propose low-cost housing projects on government land in various parts of the Kingdom.

c--Repeal of income tax on purchase and sale of real estate and property, 8 percent being sufficient instead of the 10 percent fees on transactions, as a means of stimulating the market.

d--Increasing tax brackets and exemptions for the various types of companies to encourage local investment.

e--Financing the fiscal burdens accruing on the Treasury as a result of such expansionary policies by means of a special loan from the Central Bank repayable gradually by proceeds from the sale of Government shares in successful public enterprises to the private sector.

2-Expansionary monetary policies such as those adopted by the General Bank of Jordan over the past few years, and acting to prevent domestic and external drains on local liquidity-if such exist-after careful study.

3-Complementary incentive measures and decrees stemming from the need for a clear, comprehensive, and sustained government economic policy to be explained in an ongoing information campaign promoting sectorial dimensions and the role of each of the economic factors in reinvigorating Jordan's economy. Such measures and decrees should also aim at creating a psychologically and subjectively appropriate atmosphere for a vigorous economy.

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AFGHANISTAN

SOVIET, AFGHAN FORCES ATTACK STRONGHOLDS IN PAKTIA PROVINCE

Heavy Fighting Reported

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 12 Apr 86 p 5

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (Dispatches) — Afghan Mujahideen claimed to be holding their ground Tuesday (April 8) against Soviet and Afghan forces attacking their strongholds in Southeast Afghanistan and reliable sources said scores of dead Afghan soldiers had been brought back to Kabul for burial.

Guerrilla groups said their forces were holding on to their positions in Paktia Province although they were still coming under heavy air and ground bombardment and suffering extensive casualties. Mujahideen fighters were battling Soviet and Afghan tank units around the government-held town of Khost and had destroyed a number of armored vehicles, they said.

The bodies of scores of Afghan officers and soldiers have been returned to the Afghan capital of Kabul for burial in recent days, reliable sources said. One source said about 100 bodies had arrived in the capital from the military base at Ghazni to the north of Paktia Province.

The Yunis Khalis group, one of seven main guerrilla factions, said that its forces were holding on their main base at Zhawar in Paktia and attacking Afghan and Soviet ground forces had moved back a few miles. The fighting began Friday (April 4) when hundreds of commandos were landed around Zhawar by helicopter and the fighting spread over the weekend into adjoining provinces.

Hezb-e-Islami, another of the Mujahideen groups, said in a statement that its forces were also fighting Soviet and Afghan tank columns at Bari between Khost and Paktia and that there was fierce combat.

Both Mujahideen groups admitted they suffered heavy casualties, but were unable to give any detailed figures. Guerrilla officers estimated their losses Monday (April 7) at more than 100 killed with scores wounded.

Soviet and Afghan jet fighters and Mi-24 helicopter gunships armed with rocket launchers were bombarding Mujahideen positions in Paktia and inflicting heavy losses, the guerrillas said.

The Afghan Information Center, an independent group based in the Pakistani border city of Peshawar that monitors events in Afghanistan, reported heavy aerial bombardments in Paktia and Kunar Provinces and said artillery in government bases was trying to stop Mujahideen reinforcements coming across the border.

Center Director Professor Sayed Majrooh said Mujahideen forces did appear to be holding their ground and there were some indications of Soviet and Afghan units moving back in Paktia. But government forces also appeared to be building up in Kunar and there could be major new fighting, he said.

Some 5,000 Soviet and Afghan troops have been trying to cut Mujahideen supply lines to prevent the return of Mujahideen who have been wintering in Pakistan. Thousands of guerrillas cross the border in the Spring with new weapons and supplies to reinforce groups in the interior of Afghanistan.

Casualties Heavy on Both Sides

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 17 Apr 86 p 1

[Text]

(Dispatches) — Hundreds of Soviet and Afghan troops were killed or wounded and scores of soldiers were captured during heavy fighting in southeast Afghanistan, sources said Tuesday.

Jalaluddin Haqqani, a senior Mujahideen commander in Paktia Province, scene of the worst fighting, said in a message that 70 Mujahideen had been martyred and more than 150 wounded in attacks on his main base at Zhawar. The Mujahideen had killed 200 Afghan and Soviet troops and wounded about another 300 and captured another 300 soldiers, he said.

Western diplomatic sources, speaking on condition they not be identified further, said Soviet and Afghan forces had suffered heavy casualties and fighting still was going on around the government town of Khost north of Zhawar.

Soviet and Afghan forces launched a major attack in early April on Mujahideen positions in Paktia and Ningrahar and Kunar Provinces in an effort to halt the return of Mujahideen who wintered in Pakistan.

Radio Kabul, the Afghan government radio, claimed in a broadcast Sunday night that its security forces had killed a number of Mujahideen and captured one of their main base in Paktia.

Haqqani said that his forces had shot down six jets and five helicopters during the fighting that raged around Zhawar and nearby Mujahideen positions during the past 10 days.

Wave of Bombing in Kabul
Mujahideen are expecting renewed Soviet and Afghan government strikes against their positions along the border such as the recent offensive in which some 5,000 troops were involved in Paktia, Haqqani said in the message, relayed through Mujahideen officials.

Haqqani said 38 of his followers were martyred when one of the underground bunkers at Zhawar collapsed during a bombing raid. Soviet and Afghan jets and helicopter gunships repeatedly bombed Mujahideen positions along the border and Pakistan charged that its border outposts were attacked at least twice.

About 150 Afghan Army soldiers had deserted to the Mujahideen the Mujahideen officials based in Pakistan said.

Some of the captured Afghan Army officers and soldiers were executed by firing squads after Mujahideen leaders decided they were communists, said the officials, who added that they had no further details. At least two Afghan Army colonels were captured, but it was not known if they had been executed, they said.

The Western diplomatic sources also reported a wave of explosions and bombings in the Afghan capital of Kabul during the past week. One source said there had been more than a dozen blasts. Afghan security forces had tightened security and many checkpoints had been established in the city, they said.

The Western sources had no information on damage or casualties that may have been caused by the blasts.

There are an estimated 115,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan aiding the communist government in its war against Islamic fighters.

BANGLADESH

PAPER REPORTS REQUIREMENTS FOR NOMINATION SCRUTINIZERS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 4 Apr 86 pp 1, 8

[Text]

Scrutiny of nomination papers for May 7 elections to the Jatiya Sangsad will be held on April 7 (Monday) by the Returning Officers only, the Election Commission said in Dhaka on Thursday, reports BSS.

Submission of nomination papers for the polls which began on March 22 will continue till April 6 (Sunday) as per schedule announced earlier by the Commission. The 64 Returning Officers and 470 Assistant Returning Officers are receiving the nomination papers throughout the country.

The Returning Officer and the Assistant Returning Officers will issue acknowledgements for each of the nomination paper submitted to them, where in the time, place and date of scrutiny of nomination papers will be specified.

The candidates, their election agents, proposers and seconders and one other person, who may be an Advocate, authorised in this behalf by the candidates, may attend the scrutiny. The authorised persons will be allowed to examine the nomination papers.

The Election Commission said the nomination papers shall be scrutinised by the Returning Officers as per provisions of the relevant laws and rules. He may, either of his

own motion or upon any objection raised by any person attending the scrutiny, conduct such summary enquiry as he may think fit and reject a nomination paper, if he is satisfied that:—

A. The candidate is not qualified to be elected as member of the Jatiya Sangsad;

B. The proposer or the seconder is not qualified to subscribe to the nomination paper;

C. Any provision of Article 12, 13 or 13A of the Representation of the People Order, 1972, has not been complied with;

D. The signature of the proposer or the seconder is not genuine.

The Returning Officer shall not reject a nomination paper on the ground of any defect which is not of a substantial nature and may allow any such defect to be remedied forthwith. He will not enquire into the correctness or validity of any entry in the electoral roll. The rejection of a nomination paper shall not invalidate any other valid nomination paper of a candidate who has been nominated by more than one nomination paper in five or less number of constituencies. Article 13A of the Representation of the People Order, 1972, provides that, none shall be eligible to be a can-

didate in more than five constituencies. In case, a person submits his candidature in more than five constituencies, all his nomination papers in respect of all such constituencies shall be cancelled.

Any candidate, whose nomination has been rejected by the Returning Officer during scrutiny, may prefer an appeal with the Election Commission within three days next following the date of the rejection of the nomination in the following manner:

A. The appeal shall be addressed to the Election Commission and may be filed with the Secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat;

B. An appeal shall be in the form of a memorandum which shall state the date of rejection of the nomination and the grounds of appeal and shall be accompanied by a certified copy of the order rejecting the nomination;

C. The memorandum of appeal shall be submitted in quintuplicate.

Any order passed by the Election Commission in respect of an appeal against rejection, shall be final.

The last date for withdrawal of candidature is April 12 (Saturday). Any validly nominated candidate may withdraw his candidature by delivering a notice in writing signed by him to the Returning Officer on or before the last date of withdrawal after scrutiny. Such notice may be delivered to the Returning Officer either by the candidate in person or by an agent authorised in this behalf in writing by such candidate. On receiving a notice of withdrawal, the Returning Officer will satisfy himself that the signature on the notice is that of the candidate. It may be mentioned that, a notice of withdrawal shall, in no circumstances, be open to recall or cancellation.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1643

BANGLADESH

CORRESPONDENT INTERVIEWS SHAYKH HASINA

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 6 Apr 86 p 6

[Interview with Sheikh Hasina Wajed, leader of Bangladesh's Awami League, by Barnali Mitra-Ray]

[Text]

Q: After conducting a long joint campaign with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)-led seven party alliance, why did you part company and decide to accept Gen. Ershad's invitation to participate in the elections? Together, you have conducted an agitation on the basis of your five-point charter of demands which you claimed would pave the way for a free and fair election.

A: It was not a sudden decision. When we had formulated the charter there was no talk of elections. But the charter does lead up to the polls. However, we have never agreed on everything. Even in our 15-party alliance (led by my Awami League), the parties are individual entities. There is no unified organisational structure. The parties work together on the basis of mutual understanding, but ideological differences remain. We have had differences of opinion even about the movement (for a free election). Which is why we have maintained separate identities.

Q: What is the essence of your demands?

A: We feel that the power to administer the country should come politically, through elections, and not through coups. On August 15, 1975, there

started a process of transfer of power in the country through assassinations and military plots. We have seen martial law administrators first grab power by creating a crisis and then form their own political parties. They then seek to legitimise their rule by 'winning' elections. This process still continues. We are opposed to this tendency to come to power through the bullet and then use the ballot to justify being in power.

We believe in constitutional agitation and the democratic process. I can never think of coming to power with the help of a military coup of a junta or a single general. Again, we are an independent country. It is our own army. The Awami League brought independence and organised the structure of the army. We don't believe that we can ever fight our own armed forces. That will result in a civil war-like situation with confrontation and clashes. Therefore, we have restricted ourselves to the democratic procedure of holding meetings, hartals, etc. That's all we can do.

Q: But Gen. Ershad is a comparatively liberal ruler, having given freedom to the opposition to an extent dictators in other countries have not even

dared to promise. Take, for instance, Pakistan.

A: You must remember that a martial law government can never be liberal. Martial law is martial law. Again, compared to Pakistan, the people of Bangladesh are much more politicised. Every person is politically conscious. Pakistan lacks this. The Awami League took the people to independence. We have the people's power with us.

Q: But Gen. Ershad is still President. He can still issue an ordinance and ban all political parties and activities. What would you do then?

A: We will agitate as we have done all along. What is possible in Pakistan is not possible here.

Q: Then this election can be termed a farce, because Gen. Ershad hasn't provided the atmosphere for a free election and still retains the power to change its course.

A: It's true that the election has no meaning. But then Ershad has very cleverly kept away from elections for so long. Now, he is constrained to hold elections.

Q: How much confidence do you have in Gen. Ershad that he will allow the election to be free and fair?

A: I have absolutely no faith in Ershad. None at all.

Q: In that case, why are you participating in the elections?

A: One has to change strategy at certain stages of a movement. We've fought for the past four years against a military regime trying to legitimise itself through elections. We resorted to strikes, processions and meetings, which I have found have not been effective in the short run. Our movement seemed to be suiting Ershad's convenience.

If you remember, Ershad called elections four times and postponed them every time. He calls elections, but does not create the necessary atmosphere. When the opposition parties complain, he tells the world that he wants to go to the polls, but the opposition parties do not want elections. He has tactfully established this sort of a personal reputation outside. It is a lie. He is the one who has backed out every time and blamed the opposition squarely.

What do we want? Just the atmosphere for a free and fair election. Last time, he cancelled elections and held a referendum, forming the upozilas. A referendum in which not even three per cent of the electorate voted. Yet he declared that he had won the approval of 90 per cent of the people. We won't allow him to do it again.

One thing must be made clear. He is being forced to take the steps he is taking now; he is not doing us a favour. He cannot act arbitrarily because we are politically conscious and are actively involved in the movement. It is solely because of our pressure that he is being liberal, to whatever degree that might be. When he did not let us conduct political activity, we violated his martial law. We agitated and secured the right to conduct open political activity. For this end, many of our boys gave their blood. The military had opened fire on our processions, ran trucks over them, but finally conceded our demand. Ershad was even forced to announce a date for elections. But he did not stick to it. He is doing this all the time.

But he cannot do as he pleases. He is behaving like Zia-ur Rahman. Zia had a 19-point programme, Ershad announced his 18; Zia formed the Jago Dal, Ershad his Jana Dal; Zia made a front, so did he. But nothing endures. Whatever he starts comes to a quick end. He is just like Zia. When nothing worked, the BNP was formed. Ershad is following in his tracks. Now he has his Jatiya Party, and has also announced elections. But he won't be able to succeed as easily as Zia. We won't let him.

Q: Who do you mean by 'we'? All the opposition parties? Why haven't you been able to convince the BNP to participate in the elections?

A: Those who believe in a constitutional democracy and want it should definitely participate in the elections. The Awami League's and BNP's first announcements (concerning the elections after the date was declared) were actually not dissimilar. Both were conditional, only the issues were different. They did accept the idea of elections.

Q: But shouldn't the opposition parties be united at such a crucial juncture?

A: They have to make their own decision; I cannot make it for them.

Q: How much trouble do you expect on May 7?

A: Not only trouble...We have information that Ershad has a lot of plans. We believe he has a budget of 100 crore takas and he will bring out the army everywhere that day. It will be like his referendum when the people didn't even need to stamp on a piece of paper, only the results were announced.

Q: What are you doing to counter all this?

A: We had issued a 10-point statement which was not allowed to be published in any newspaper, not even in advertisement form. We don't hope for a neutral election. But we will fight to the last. We have the people with us, the people want us. We will form people's committees in different areas and retaliate against his guns. Guns are never the last word in survival. Otherwise, world his-

tory would have been written differently: Yahya Khan would have won; Marcos would have stayed; so would Duvalier in Haiti and the Shah of Iran. But the power lies with the people and it is only a matter of time before they assert themselves. We've also approached the British to send neutral observers. If only we had the media at our disposal!

Q: But isn't impartial media a basic factor for an election? How can you be satisfied with what you've got?

A: No, we're not satisfied. But this new strategy, this challenge...you could call it an experiment, is turning the direction of the movement. You can already see the tide coming (waving at those assembled in her garden outside waiting for nominations). This massive response wasn't there previously. I want to put it to effective use.

Q: On what basis have you selected your candidates?

A: According to areas where we can win. One thing is true:

If a minimally neutral, free and fair election is held, there is no doubt that we will win. We are confident of gaining an overwhelming majority in Parliament. Even if the Awami League goes to the polls alone I can surely say I will get 75 per cent votes. But Ershad has his blueprint ready. However, he has his own calculations; I have mine.

As I said, though both the 15-party and the seven-party alliances accepted the elections, the BNP recanted subsequently. If we had fought together the results would have been different—we would have done much better. But I am not looking for advantage. The Awami League was not formed out of advantages. It was created at the grassroots level, through protests against misdeeds, misrule. I cannot expect a military junta to give me all I want. We might win, or lose, I might live or die or be destroyed but I cannot wait for Ershad to implement his promises, which I don't believe he will keep. I've taken my decision. Those who want to come with me, fight with me, are

welcome. My movement goes on.

Q: Have you been inspired at all by Mrs Corazon Aquino?

A: Very much. I was interested in the Philippine elections right from the beginning. I had made up my mind that I would take my decision after I'd seen the outcome of that poll. I was probably the first person to wish Corazon Aquino on her victory on behalf of the people of Bangladesh. I sent her a congratulatory telegram even before the results were actually declared. I had judged the outcome correctly. The ballot is always the most powerful of all political forces.

Q: The Shah Bano case has triggered off a raging controversy in India about the status of the Muslim woman. Do you concur with the Supreme Court judgment, that allegedly went against the Shariat?

A: Whatever is said in Islam is law for us. But one must change with the times and interpret the laws accordingly. Actually, Islam is interpreted differently in different countries. For instance, marriage laws in Saudi Arabia are diffe-

rent from those in Bangladesh. Islam says all men and women are equal and have equal rights. But I suppose Muslim women have to take a back seat in male dominated societies, where laws are interpreted by men. In my country, women cannot go to a mosque to pray, yet men and women can enter and pray together at the Ka'aba mosque!

Q: What have you done to bring women to the fore, socially and politically, in Bangladesh?

A: We have a 12-point programme for the emancipation of women. We have our women's organisations and we are fighting for a change in our inheritance laws, the benefactors of which are males. If the laws are not amended there will never be population control in Bangladesh (laughs). But you see, there is a widespread lack of education among the masses. It was Bangabandhu who first spoke about women's rights and position in our country. Before that nothing had been done for women here. Your country is a democracy, you can achieve things so easi-

ly there. We have had democracy for only three and a half years since 1948. Under military rule you cannot do much.

Q: Do you have any fears for your personal security?

A: My parents, brothers, sisters were killed in this house (Sheikh Mujib's Dhanmondi house) in this very country. How can I be sure of personal security? Do you know that my father's assassins were not tried? That they did not receive any punishment? Zia-ur Rahman decreed that they would not be tried. That according to the Constitution there could not be a trial. Instead, they were given good jobs in various embassies, their only qualification being that they were the murderers of the father of the nation. Ershad has even given them promotions and they are politically active today. They will not hesitate in making an attempt on my life because I am emerging as a political force. But I have to fight for the people and my opponents are not the martial law administrators but murderers as well.

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CSO: 4600/1647

BANGLADESH

PAPERS REPORT SHAYKH HASINA'S 4 APRIL SPEECH

Government's Responsibilities Noted

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 5 Apr 86 p 1

[Text] Sheikh Hasina, President of Bangladesh Awami League, in a statement on Friday urged all political parties to participate in the parliamentary polls to free the nation from the clutches of Martial Law and make the election meaningful. She simultaneously urged the Government to create necessary conditions so that all political parties could participate in the polls.

Sheikh Hasina alleged that President Ershad had violated his commitment made to the nation to maintain neutrality by making speech in the meeting of Jatiya Party and allowing it to hold the meeting in the CMLA Secretaryat. She said that President was directly influencing the administration in favour of Jatiya Party candidates and even his portraits were printed in the election poster of Jatiya Party. This conspiracy had been made obvious to the people through these actions. She also said that by these actions the President had violated the rules of Government service.

Sheikh Hasina warned that the Bangladesh Awami League and the 15-party alliance had agreed to participate in the election on the basis of the President's commitment of maintaining neutrality. She said that it was the responsibility of the head of the government to create congenial conditions and make the election meaningful through maintaining neutrality. But she said that the Government would have to face the consequences in the event of any deviation from it. The nation, she said, would not pardon him for this action.

She apprehended that the administration could not remain neutral unless the head of the government remained neutral.

She said that the Jatiya Party apprehending their defeat in the coming elections were changing the list of its candidates frequently. It was changing its candidates as soon as the Awami League and the 15-party Alliance completed its preparation for the participation in the polls.

More Details on Speech

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 5 Apr 86 pp 1, 8

[Text] Awami League President Sheikh Hasina Wazed said on Friday that her party believed the Government could be changed through elections, not by weapons and revolution.

Sheikh Hasina was addressing the Awami League leaders and workers who had assembled at Road No 32, Dhanmondi, where the list of party candidates to ensuing Jatiya Sangsad polls was announced.

The party candidates and their supporters gathered at Dhanmondi since morning. Earlier on Thursday Acting General Secretary of the party, Begum Sajeda Choudhury asked the partymen who sought nomination to contest in the polls to be present at Dhanmondi at 9 a.m. (Friday). They waited there throughout the day and the list was announced in the evening. The announcement was preceded by the address of the party President.

Sheikh Hasina maintained that the main point of the five-point demands was the demand for elections to sovereign parliament. She said that a sovereign parliament could solve all complications.

The AL President said, "we have taken the challenge. The Martial Law Government wants to legalise its legitimacy, while we want to establish a representative government."

Sheikh Hasina said those who had quit the Alliance would realise that it was not possible to go against the current. "Their decision has created some confusion in the people. But, it would be removed when the election fever would be created," she said.

Sheikh Hasina said that the Awami League had to sacrifice a lot for the sake of 15-Party Alliance. She asked the Awami Leaguers to be prepared to make more sacrifices.

The Awami League President said "some of our leaders had held discussions with the 7-Party Combine and the 15-Party Alliance leaders on Thursday and Friday. The Seven-Party Combine also wants to take part in elections. There are questions of sharing of seats. If Seven-Party and BNP agree to take part in the elections we will have to sacrifice some more seats." She told her partymen not to be frustrated. "If we win in the elections, then we shall again go for elections on party-basis with our symbol--boat," she said.

Meanwhile, in a press statement on Friday Sheikh Hasina called upon all patriotic, democratic and nationalist forces, including those who are outside the election arena, to take part in the polls to win the electoral battle.

The Awami League chief said "come and join us in the battle of ballot to emancipate people from Martial Law rule."

Sheikh Hasina Wazed warned the Government not to allow his picture in the Jatiya Party candidate's posters and create congenial atmosphere for the political parties to join the polls.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1645

BANGLADESH

SHAYKH HASINA ADDRESSES CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATION

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 5 Apr 86 pp 1, 8

[Text] Awami League President Sheikh Hasina on Friday afternoon announced the names of party candidates in the coming parliamentary elections. However, she said that the list is provisional and instructed the party candidates to withdraw their candidature in case of seat adjustments with the nine components of the 15-party Alliance including BNP.

She made the announcement while addressing a gathering of applicants for party nomination and their supporters on Friday afternoon at the Dhamondi residence of her father late Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Awami League chief said that her party has the background of sacrifice for greater interest and urged the party candidates to be prepared for further sacrifice if need be. She also assured the party leaders and workers that if the party becomes victorious in the coming election they will hold election in future on party basis when boat will be the party symbol.

To justify the decision for participation in the election, Sheikh Hasina said that the present rulers were trying to legalise itself through election whereas they want to establish a representative government. She added that her party does not want to go to power through back door in the darkness of the night. Awami League is a mass based political party and as such has accepted the election as a challenge. She observed that removal of the present Government is not possible through use of arms or coup and election was the only alternative.

She also asserted that the government cannot implement the blueprint of farcical election if the people are united. She called upon party supporters to post 100 volunteers in each centre to count votes cast there and send report to Dhaka. If this instruction is followed then the government bid to rig the election can be foiled, she added.

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CSO: 4600/1645

BANGLADESH

JATIYA JANATA NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN POLLS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 4 Apr 86 pp 1, 8

[Text]

Rear Admiral (Retd.) M. H. Khan, Convener, Jatiya Janata Party, on Thursday said that his party would not take part in the ensuing polls "in the absence of congenial atmosphere"

Addressing a press conference at his party office, the JJP Convener said that a climate suitable to election did not exist in the country. Law and order situation had deteriorated and educational institutions turned into a battle ground, he said.

The JJP Convener also called upon all political parties to forge unity on minimum programme to create proper atmosphere for transition to democracy.

Replying to a question Mr. Khan said that some leaders of his party had recently met Begum Khaleda Zia to discuss the present political situation and the possibility of united movement. He regretted that opposition political parties were engaged in vilification and mudslinging at each other. "This will vitiate the political atmosphere," he said.

/9317
CSO: 4600/1643

BANGLADESH

BANGLADESH WORKERS RETURN FROM SAUDI PRISONS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 5 Apr 86 pp 1, 8

[Text] One hundred and forty Bangladeshis returned to Dhaka on Friday from different Saudi Arabian jails. Many of the returnees were working in various firms in Saudi Arabia for years. They had been detained by the Saudi police for their alleged failure to produce valid immigration documents and employment permits. A large number of Bangladeshis are still languishing in Saudi prisons.

Those who returned to Dhaka on Friday by the Saudia (the Saudi Arabia Airlines) had no belongings with them. Many of them were in miserable condition. The returnees, according to a passenger of the Saudia who came to Dhaka by the same flight, were picked up by the police from different places and put in jail and subjected to rigorous work during the period of detention. The detention period varied. Somebody could get away early from the jail provided he had paid for his journey back home. Also the arrested person had to undergo a long period of detention. Some arrested persons could be released early if anyone in Saudi Arabia paid his travel expenses for his journey back home. On return to the Dhaka airport the returnees were taken to the police custody for interrogation.

An officer of the immigration department told this correspondent on Friday that to minimise the sufferings of the already sufferers the Special Branch of the Police has simplified the process of disposal of the cases of the returnees. The new procedure require the returnee to fill in a proforma giving particulars about himself and the purpose of his visit to that country. Thirty-two more Bangladeshis were sent back to Dhaka in the last two flights. There are three Saudia flights to Dhaka weekly. The immigration officer said that at present the returnees are huddled into the aircraft with only a boarding card and no tickets. Earlier on arrival at the Dhaka Airport without payment a returnee was used to be kept in detention unless someone paid his travel expenses.

Cut in Salary

A passenger who accompanied the illegal immigrants to Dhaka was a labourer in a Saudi-Kuwaiti joint venture manufacturing items with fibre glass. The company, like many other Saudi firms, have been retrenching workers due to

the sharp fall in oil prices, the main foreign exchange earner of Saudi Arabia. The salary of the passenger who had been on the employment of the Saudi-Kuwaiti company had also been reduced by 30 percent like others. Out of the twelve Bangladeshis, seven returned to Dhaka on Friday refusing to accept the reduced salary. The passenger said that the five other passengers would also return to Bangladesh after performing the hajj. The travel expenses of the seven workers were, however, borne by the firm, the passenger said. The condition of workers from other countries, viz India, Pakistan and the Philippines, are no better in Saudi Arabia. Hundreds of nationals of these countries are being pushed out of Saudi Arabia for what is alleged illegal entry into that country.

It is alleged that many innocent persons fall in the trap of manpower agents and they go to Saudi Arabia with fictitious work permit with employment in non-existent firms.

Police rounded up such persons and detained them for violating the tight immigration rules of that country. Some people going with valid documents also suffer in the hands of the strict Saudi police when they fail to readily produce the required documents.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1645

28 May 1986

BANGLADESH

BRIEFS

ACCORD WITH CANADA--The new quota agreement signed in Dhaka on Monday between Canada and Bangladesh limits the annual Bangladesh exports of pants, shorts, overalls and coveralls to 8.25 lakh units. The exports of trousers, pants, slacks or jeans (MBWG) will not exceed 2.25 lakh units within the overall country, export limit of 8.25 lakh units for the items covered under it. The agreement was signed by the two sides following the two-day talks in Dhaka. The Bangladesh delegation to the talks was led by Mr A.B.M. Golam Mostafa, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, while the Canadian side was led by Mr W.V. Turner from the Canadian Ministry of External Affairs. A handout issued by Press Information Department said that the agreement would come into effect from April 1, '86 and remain in force till December 31, '86. "Bangladesh will restrain its exports to Canada of pants, shorts, overalls and coveralls to a level of no more than 6,18,750 of which no more than 1,68,750 shall be trousers, slacks, pants or jeans (MBWG)," the handout added. The quota consultations in Dhaka were held following a Canadian request under Article 3 of the Multi Fibre Arrangement (MFA). Negotiations were earlier held in Ottawa on February 10 and 11 last. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 8 Apr 86 p 8] /9317

BORDER TALKS END--New Delhi, Apr 11 (BSS)--The Bangladesh border delegation led by the Director-General of BDR Major General Sofi Ahmed Chowdhury, left here for Calcutta today on way back home after two days of talks with Indian side on border problems. The Director-General of BSF, Mr M.C. Misra, who led the Indian side during the talks was at the airport this morning to see General Chowdhury off. The talks concluded on Wednesday, were held in an atmosphere of cordiality and understanding and covered issues like trans-border crimes, smuggling, land problem and illegal crossings, according to official sources. Both sides resolved to further tighten vigilance on the border and expressed satisfaction over the existing arrangements to check border crimes. During the visit, leader of Bangladesh delegation called on Union Home Minister Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, State Minister for Internal Security, Mr Arun Nehru and Home Secretary, Mr R.D. Pradhan. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 12 Apr 86 p 1p] /9317

CSO: 4600/1654

INDIA

MINISTER REGRETS NONIMPLEMENTATION OF NAM PROGRAMS

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Apr 86 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 7.

THE dismal record of South-South co-operation was highlighted by a review by the officials of the non-aligned countries who began their five-day meeting here today.

A selective approach to programmes of co-operation and a realistic agenda were suggested at the fifth meeting of the action programme for economic co-operation on non-aligned countries.

The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, frankly admitted that political will and executive vigour had been lacking.

Expressing his disappointment at the slow implementation of various social and economic programmes of the non-aligned countries to promote South-South co-operation, Mr. Narayanan said it was now necessary to instill new life and dynamism into these programmes.

He as well as Mr. N. P. Jain, secretary in the external affairs ministry, suggested that the programme should concentrate on selected areas only.

Mr. Narayanan called upon the delegates to identify shortcomings and

obstacles and devise realistic strategies during their deliberations.

He regretted that proposals for setting up of funds by the non-aligned movement and the Group of 77 had not made much headway. The minister said a fresh stimulus could be provided by commencing with more modest ventures such as regional payments and clearing arrangements in the first instance to underpin intra-south trade and industrial co-operation.

He noted with satisfaction that trade among developing countries had grown faster than the rates of global trade expansion. However, the South-South trade was still only 30 per cent of the total world trade and the aim should be to double this quantum in the next decade.

Mr. Narayanan also pointed out that the implementation of the project for a centre for science and technology in India required some more signatures for the ratification of its statute.

He suggested that the South should pool and share the technologies it had already mastered to provide a base for absorbing higher technologies in future. He also pointed out that the scope for sharing small, medium and appropriate technologies among the nations of the south was very great.

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CSO: 4600/1678

INDIA

NONALIGNED MEETING DISCUSSES ACTION PROGRAM, OTHER MATTERS

Madras THE HINDU in English 11 Apr 86 p 9

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 10.

A battle royal has been raging behind the scenes at the four-day meeting of the non-aligned countries on the action programme for economic cooperation on a non-issue that is of no direct concern or consequence to the movement.

It relates to the North Korean demand for jointly hosting the Olympics in 1988 along with South Korea in the name of democratisation of international sports and facilitating Korean reunification.

As the action programme for economic cooperation includes sports, the Coordinating Committee on the Non-aligned Countries on Sports met in Havana last month and adopted a resolution to this effect. The member countries of this body, which include Cuba, Algeria, Libya and Madagascar, have been urging the participants of this meeting on action programme to adopt a resolution requesting the International Olympics Association to let both Koreas host the games in 1988.

But the supporters of South Korea, including the ASEAN, have been opposing this move, maintaining that the city of Seoul and not the State of South Korea has been asked to play host and this privilege cannot be shared by it with the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, or for that matter even with any other city even within South Korea without the permission of the Olympic Association.

The Olympic Association itself had convened a meeting of representatives of both Koreas some time back to resolve this tangle. During these discussions, South Korea is reported to have agreed to let Pyongyang hold a few events, so long as Seoul remained the main host.

India lukewarm: As current chairman of the non-aligned movement, India has been trying to find a way out without setting a bad precedent for settling such disputes in future. It has been opposing the adoption of a resolution by the participating countries in the meeting on economic cooperation, since officially the action programme covers not only non-aligned countries but also other developing countries which include South Korea.

As such, it was not possible or desirable in India's view to adopt a resolution, or even make a recommendatory reference in the proposed joint declaration, in the absence of South Korea, without giving it a chance to explain its position. So instead of discussing this issue at the plenary meetings, it was quietly delegated to the Drafting Committee to find a set of words that would effectively dilute the reference without making any specific recommendation to the Olympic Association.

The ding-dong drama has been dragging on behind the scenes with India playing a moderating role to avoid embarrassment to itself as well as the non-aligned movement. But the supporters and opponents of the Cuban move to get the non-aligned community lend its support to the North Korean demand have been canvassing hard behind the scenes.

After spending almost five hours on this sterile discussion, the Indian Chairman, Mr N. P. Jain, Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, summed up admirably without committing India one way or the other with a formulation designed to dilute and by-pass this controversial issue on this occasion. He said that it was a very technical matter which should be referred to various non-aligned Governments, so that they could consult their national sports bodies and other concerned organisations.

Nicaraguan claim: Meanwhile, Nicaragua started staking its claim to host the ninth non-aligned summit in Managua in 1990, since it would be the turn of Latin America to have this conference. The ministerial meeting of the Coordination Bureau, which is being held in Delhi next week to prepare for the eighth summit in Harare in August this year, is not competent to either take a decision or even make a recommendation on the choice of the venue for the 1990 summit.

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CSO: 4600/1679

INDIA

MINISTER SPEAKS ON DEFENSE PURCHASE, COOPERATION POLICY

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Apr 86 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 7.

THE minister of state for defence, Mr. Arun Singh categorically denied in the Lok Sabha today that India had ever approached the U.S. for purchase of arms.

"We have not approached the U.S. government for any arms purchases either as outright purchase or in any licenced production concepts. Indeed, we have not even discussed the purchase of any weapon systems of any type," Mr. Singh said while intervening in the debate on the demand for grants of the defence ministry.

Mr. Singh said there was a basic distinction between arms purchases and cooperation in defence research.

India he said was having cooperation in defence research with a number of countries, which is a common phenomenon in this century.

He said: "We are having a memorandum of understanding on defence cooperation on certain technologies with a number of countries, including the USA."

Intervening in the debate, Mr. Arun Singh assured the house the main battle tank "Arjun" would soon be in production line. "It will be the pride of the nation and not just of the army," he said.

It was unjustified to state that too much time had been taken to develop

the tank.

A notable point made by the Telugu Desam member, Mr. Ayyapu Reddy, was that there was no alternative to India acquiring the nuclear arms capability in view of the deteriorating security scenario around the country.

Stating that the options were becoming narrower and narrower, the TD member urged the government to accept the inevitable and shake off the "Hamlet-like dilemma".

The minister of state for defence production, Mr. Sukh Ram, said the government had taken necessary steps to acquire and produce sophisticated weapons to defend the integrity of the country in the face of acquisition of modern weapons by a neighbour.

Intervening in the debate on demands for grants of his ministry, Mr. Sukh Ram said India was committed to peace in the world and it had taken steps to forge friendly relations with its neighbours.

However, he said, four wars had been thrust upon the country since independence and it could not remain silent when its neighbouring country was acquiring sophisticated arms, he said without naming the country.

Mr. Sukh Ram during his intervention referred to modernisation plans for ordnance factories, efforts to indigenise equipment and phasing out items of low technology.

He said 34 ordnance factories in different parts of the country were engaged in production of a vast range of weapons and armaments including battle tanks, armmunitions, mines, and radars.

The minister said a high caliber 155 mm gun would also be manufactured.

In order to improve efficiency in production and making it cost effective, ordnance factories were being continuously modernised by absorbing modern technology.

Mr. Sukh Ram assured that while modernising there would not be any retrenchment of workers.

RECORD PRODUCTION

He said there had been a record production of Rs. 1,353 crore as compared to the targetted Rs. 1,325 crore in the ordnance factories this year.

Indigenous R and D was gaining momentum and imported raw material content used in various weapons was being reduced, the minister said.

Mr. Eduarado Faleiro and Mr. Dilip Singh Bhuria, both Congress, called for imparting compulsory military training to the people in order to inculcate a sense of patriotism and discipline.

Both the members also stressed the importance of indigenous production of defence armaments to the economy.

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CSO: 4600/1678

INDIA

PRESS REPORTS DISCUSSION OF STAND ON SRI LANKA

Bhagat Remarks in Lok Sabha

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 10 Apr 86 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 9.—The External Affairs Minister, Mr Bali Ram Bhagat, told the Lok Sabha today that this country would not extend recognition to the Tamil liberation movement in Sri Lanka on the lines extended to the SWAPO and the PLO "because right from the beginning we have maintained the position that this is Sri Lanka's internal matter".

The ethnic issue, he added, was a political one which had to be solved by Sri Lanka politically and peacefully through negotiations so as to ensure the satisfaction of the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils. Such political solution could only be within the framework of the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka.

"It will be wrong to say that we should give recognition to the Sri Lanka Tamil liberation movement. That is not in line with our policy", Mr Bhagat added. He was answering supplementaries to a question on the subject.

He made it clear that this matter had to be solved through political negotiations and not militarily. He also repeated that it was the responsibility of the Sri Lankan Government to ensure that security forces were deployed only to maintain peace.

Mr Bhagat indicated that the Government was awaiting new and concrete proposals from the Sri Lankan Government for solution of the problem. The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr Hamid, was expected to bring them when he came here to attend the non-aligned meeting beginning on April 16. When the proposals were received,

they would be discussed first with the Tamil groups. Then the Sri Lankan Government would be approached for further discussions.

KILLINGS

Having said that, he added that the present killings of Tamils must stop if a peaceful climate was to be created which would be conducive to a political solution.

Mr Bhagat told one member that this was a very great human problem. There were more than 125,000 refugees in this country now who had to return in dignity and honour to their own country.

He agreed with another member that there had been contradictory signals from Sri Lanka. The Government talked of a political solution, but at the same time there were reports of killings. The danger of Big Power involvement was also there. "It is a very complex situation".

The main question, put by Mr Atish Chandra Sinha Congress(I) and Mr P. Kolandaivelu (AIADMK) was whether the Sri Lankan Gov-

ernment had turned down the proposal for a political solution to the Tamils' ethnic problem, whether the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in India recently held discussions with the Union Government on the subject, and what was the outcome of such discussions.

In his written reply Mr Bhagat said that the Sri Lankan Government had turned down the proposals put forward by the TULF. "Earlier the Tamil groups had rejected proposals put forward by the Sri Lankan Government".

In reply to an unstarred question on this subject, the Government said the Government of India welcomed the assurances received from Sri Lankan authorities. It was, however, constrained to take note of "certain other statements made at high levels attributed to official sources in Sri Lanka, indicating that the Government of that country is determined to achieve a military solution to the ethnic problem".

Madras THE HINDU in English 10 Apr 86 p 6

[Excerpts]

Peace-keeping forces? Asked whether India favoured posting of peace-keeping forces of the United Nations in Sri Lanka in view of the alleged mass killings of Tamils there, the Minister said India was opposed to the presence of foreign elements including those from Pakistan and Israel.

The Minister said, "We are keeping a close watch on the future developments in Sri Lanka. He added, "We have been told that the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka who is coming here to attend the meeting of the Bureau of non-aligned countries is bringing in a fresh proposal from his Government for finding a solution to the problem." As and when the proposal was received the Government of India would discuss it with Tamil groups and inform the Sri Lankan Government accordingly.

Political solution: Mr. Bhagat said India from the very beginning had taken the stand that the Tamils problem was a political problem which called for a political solution through peaceful negotiations.

Replying to a supplementary, the Minister said the Government was aware of the killings of Tamils by security forces and had warned the Sri Lankan Government of the dangers in seeking a military solution to a political problem.

Asked by Mr. Thampan Thomas whether the Government was aware of the fact that the presence of Pakistani elements in Sri Lanka posed a serious threat to India's security, the Minister said India was aware of this. "We are taking all precautionary measures" in this regard.

Envoy's talks: Replying a question, Mr. Bhagat said the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka called on the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi on March 19 and also separately discussed certain issues with the former Foreign Secretary (Mr. Romesh Bhandari).

Mr. Bhagat said the High Commissioner reiterated the commitment of the Government of Sri Lanka to a political solution and its desire for continued Indian good offices to help in achieving such a solution.

The Prime Minister, he said, had conveyed to the High Commissioner, the Government's concern at the conflicting reports from Sri Lanka, and at the actions of the Sri Lankan security forces against the Tamil population.

The High Commissioner was once again told the Government's view that there could be no military solution to the ethnic problem and that the onus for creating conditions conducive to a political solution was on the Sri Lanka Government. Mr. Bhagat said.—PTI

HINDU Analyst Comments

Madras THE HINDU in English 10 Apr 86 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 9.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. B. R. Bhagat, told Parliament today that the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr. A. C. S. Hamid, would be bringing some "definite written proposals" for finding a lasting solution to the Tamil problem, when he arrives in Delhi next Monday to attend the Non-Aligned ministerial conference.

Mr. Bhagat did not disclose the details of these proposals other than saying, during the question hour in the Lok Sabha that India had insisted on written proposals this time.

The Sri Lankan Minister will be discussing the scope of these proposals with Mr. Bhagat and also calling on the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, with a message from his President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, on the subject.

Dixit's report: It is understood that Mr. Jayewardene told the Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Mr. J. N. Dixit, yesterday that he would be sending some specific proposals through Mr. Hamid spelling out how far the Sri

Lankan Government was prepared to go in granting a substantial measure of autonomy to the Tamils within the framework of the island's unitary constitution. The report from the High Commissioner containing the broad outlines of these proposals was received in Delhi only this morning, but Mr. Bhagat availed himself of the opportunity of some routine questions in the Lok Sabha today on the Tamil problem to disclose this new development.

The main hurdle still to any meaningful discussion on this ethnic issue, either between the Indian and Sri Lankan Governments or the Tamil leaders and the Sri Lankan Government, is the continued refusal of Mr. Jayewardene to make a firm commitment that the killings of innocent Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan security forces would be stopped soon. He has lately been citing the Punjab parallel to justify his contention that the military operations against the militants must go on even while he is engaged in negotiations with the moderates for finding a lasting political solution to the Tamil problem.

Indiscriminate killings: The Indian view is that there can be no meaningful discussions as long as the indiscriminate killings of innocent Tamils continue as part of a punitive bid to intimidate them. So during the talks with Mr. Hamid in Delhi next week, both Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. Bhagat will insist that there should be a proper ceasefire before the commencement of a new dialogue on the proposed autonomy for the Tamil region.

Degree of devolution: In extending its good offices, the Government of India has not been bothered so much about the constitutional framework as the quantum of devolution. The representatives of the two Governments have been discussing, both formally and informally, over the last few months about the degree of devolution and the procedures for it in the context of the Sri Lankan draft proposals contained in the so-called working paper that has proved a non-starter and the Tamil United Liberation Front's counter-proposals which have been rejected by the Sri Lankan Government.

There is considerable gap between the Indian and Sri Lankan positions on the extent of autonomy especially in relation to law and order, the land settlement question and powers of the provincial executives and legislatures, not to speak of adequate representation for Tamils in the Central Cabinet, the Administrative Services and the Armed Forces. If Mr. Hamid is able to provide the necessary assurances on some of these issues, the Prime Minister would be prepared to send a special emissary to Colombo for further discussions with Mr. Jayewardene, after eliciting the reactions of the Tamil leaders either in Madras or Delhi.

Tamil aspirations: It was to reassure the Sri Lankan Government that, in pressing for a larger measure of autonomy to satisfy the Tamil aspirations, India was not in any way supporting a separatist movement that Mr. Bhagat said in Parliament today that there was no question of supporting any move by the Tamil militants to form an independent Government.

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CSO: 4600/1666

INDIA

FAROOQ ABDULLAH EXPECTS KASHMIR POLLS IN OCTOBER

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Apr 86 p 4

[Text]

JAMMU, April 7 (PTI): The former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, is confident that the state assembly would be dissolved, and fresh elections would be held in Jammu and Kashmir within six months.

Addressing a public meeting here on Wednesday after a meeting with the Prime Minister in New Delhi, the former chief minister said his party was wedded to defending the secular legacy of the state.

A strong and united India, Dr. Abdullah said, was the need of the hour, and it was therefore important that harmony existed between different communities in the country.

Dr. Abdullah, who is touring the interior areas of Jammu region asserted that the next popular government in the state would be formed by his party.

He said it would endeavour to give a clean and efficient administration to the people. Those with a record of corruption will have no place in his party, he said.

The former chief minister also inaugurated a "Shahidi Samarak" (Martyrs memorial) at Satrayan, 25-km. from here on the border, in memory of the army jawans who had down their lives in 1965 and 1971 wars. Maj. Gen. Hoon, the area commander was present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir governor, Mr. Jagmohan, met the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi on Wednesday to apprise him of the steps taken to control the law and order situation in the state.

This was Mr. Jagmohan's first meeting with him on the administration in the state in the wake of dismissal of the G. M. Shah government.

The governor also met the president, Mr. Zail Singh on Thursday morning.

/9317
CSO: 4600/1665

INDIA

LETTER RECEIVED FROM INDIAN PRISONER IN PAKISTAN JAIL

Madras THE HINDU in English 29 Mar 86 p 9

[Text]

CALICUT, March 28.

At least 77 Indians are languishing for more than a year in the Central Jail in Baluchistan, in Pakistan, for being found in Pakistani territory without valid visas, if letters received from them by their families are to be believed. One of the last letters received from them, says the Indian prisoners planned to launch a hunger-strike in the jail for better food and treatment as well as their release.

Composition of prisoners: A letter received by a family in Vellayil, Calicut, says 41 of the prisoners are Gujaratis, 25 Punjabis, three Rajasthanis, three Kannadigas and four Keralites.

The letter has identified the four Keralites and their addresses as N. P. Abdulla, Panikker Road, Vellayil, Calicut; A. P. Ummer, son of Hassan, P.O. Kadallur, via Meladi, Calicut; K. Hamsa, Kaikkaran House, P.O. Madai, Cannanore; and V. Hyder, Thazhathil House, Kazhuthikkara, Thirunavaya, Malappuram district.

According to Kadeseyi, wife of one of the Indian prisoners, her husband was working in the fishing boat of a Sheikh in Kuwait, when he fell into the hands of Pakistanis. A letter she received recently said while in the sea, the fishing boat in which her husband was working was caught in rough weather and strayed into Iranian waters. The boat and 11 others occupying it were caught by Iranian naval personnel and later taken and left to fend for themselves on the Pakistan-Baluchistan border. There the men in the boat were taken into custody by the Pakistani authorities, as they did not have passports or other travel documents.

Plea to Ministry: Kadeseyi and her three children, as well as her aged mother-in-law, sent an appeal to the External Affairs Ministry. The letter was acknowledged. Later the Special Branch police made further enquiries, but no word has reached them from the Government about the fate that awaited their breadwinner, who had gone to Kuwait with a visa that cost Rs. 17,000.

One of the letters received by another family, from Pakistan indicated that the Pakistan authorities expect some of their prisoners in India to be freed in exchange for the Indian prisoners in that jail.

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CSO: 4600/1664

IRAN

LIBYAN OFFICIAL GIVES VIEWS ON AMERICAN 'AGGRESSION'

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 27 Mar 86 pp 16, 2

[Interview with Tehran Libyan People's Bureau Secretary 'Abdollah Ahmad Fazel, date and place not specified]

[Text] After the news of America's military aggression against Libya, we decided to interview brother 'Abdollah Ahmad Fazel, Secretary of the Tehran Libyan People's Bureau in order to learn of the latest developments in the story. Below is the text of the interview.

[Question] We will begin by asking, what is your analysis of American imperialism's aggression against Libya?

[Answer] Actually, American terrorism is not a new thing that has just appeared. It has existed for many years, since the time the Great Satan established Israel in the area and decided to support it.

What has happened in Libya is unfortunate, in that a great nation such as America has attacked a small nation such as Libya. On the other hand, however, for Libya it is a great honor to have risen to face of a superpower such as America.

Actually, the Libyan people's committees had made their decision at the outset of America's aggression against Libya. This decision was "the Gulf of Sidra or Death." Moreover, these committees saw any kind of threat against the Gulf of Sidra as a threat to the entire Libyan nation.

It must be said that if America wants to take direct action in Libya, it must do so over three million corpses. Perhaps then it will be able to reach its aggressive, terrorist goals. Otherwise, America will not be able to reach any goal in Libya. The American show of power is seen as a cover for recent terrorist actions by the Zionist enemy. Likewise, America has had many plots against this small nation and against progressive nations in the area. America has gone to war against us and other countries, but it has been defeated in all of these countries. It will also be defeated in Libya, as it was in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Lebanon, and Iran. America has learned nothing from these lessons.

The small and revolutionary nation of Libya will teach America an unforgettable lesson. Reagan must know that the land of the great September revolution is not a stage. It is a land of revolution, a hot land, and it will burn its enemies. The Libyan nation will take revenge for

America's aggression. Here it must be said that the entire region has been threatened by American terrorism. As long as our gulf and our nation are threatened by a superpower such as America, we will not allow the region to remain secure and in peace.

Likewise, the peace and security of the Mediterranean nations will be severely threatened by America's aggressive and hostile measures against Libya. These nations must maintain their awareness of America's aggression, because America's hostility and aggression are not limited to Libya. They are also directed against revolutionary and progressive countries such as Iran. Clearly, both Libya and the Islamic republic have risen to fight imperialism and Zionism, and this is the primary cause for the anxiety of America, Reagan, and the Zionist enemy. God willing, however, with solidarity, we will be triumphant over all enemies, and victory will be ours. This revolution will move ahead of those combatants who have defended freedom and independence.

[Question] How do you assess the progression of events and developments in America's aggression against Libya?

[Answer] The Secretary of the Libyan People's Bureau in Tehran said: America actually began its plots against the Libyan nation after being driven out of Libyan territory, which it had formerly used as a base of operations against the Libyan nation, nations in the region, and progressive, revolutionary, and freedom-loving nations. Therefore, after the triumphant September revolution America became worried and began its display of power in order to convince nations that America is a great nation, but this actually displays America's terrorism, because when America took action against this small but willful nation, it showed itself to be terrorist. Thus, after the great September revolution, America began its plots against the Libyan nation. Libya is not only Mu'ammarr Qadhafi. Mu'ammarr Qadhafi is not the president. He is the leader of a revolution. The entire Libyan nation is Mu'ammarr Qadhafi. Therefore America must not think that it can plot against the leader of the revolution, brother Mu'ammarr Qadhafi, because any kind of plot against Mu'ammarr Qadhafi will be seen as a plot against the entire Libyan nation. There will be no end to Mu'ammarr Qadhafi unless there is an end to the Libyan nation. Neither will the September revolution come to an end unless the entire Libyan nation and all progressive and revolutions and liberation movements come to an end. This revolution will continue, and the combative brother Mu'ammarr Qadhafi will remain its leader.

In the beginning, the Gulf of Sidra was threatened by America. We had previously purchased passenger aircraft from America, and America did not authorize their delivery to the Libyan nation. In the area of petroleum, America recalled its companies and specialists from Libya, undertaking economic war against the Libyan government and nation and opposing the export of agricultural and industrial tools to Libya.

Moreover, it plotted against the Libyan government and its nation through OPEC and staged maneuvers near the Libyan coast to threaten our nation. It must be added in this context that America also cut its relations with Libya. In reality, America took many measures against us, but achieved no result. America believes it can bring the Libyan nation under its dominion, but the Libyan nation has will and speaks the truth, and it will not be dominated by America or anyone else, because the Libyan nation is a free and revolutionary nation, and it will confront all imperialist plots.

[Question] In your view, is there a relationship between America's aggression against the Libyan nation and Iraq's imposed war against the Islamic republic?

[Answer] In our view, this war is an imperialist plot to pit two Muslim nations against one another. Of course our position as the Libyan government in this regard has been specified, and this is seen as the primary motivation for America's threat against Libya. America's plan in the area is a single plan, but it has various scenarios. Sometimes it takes the form of imposed war, sometimes it takes the form of threats and aggression against Libya, but the designer of this scenario is one person, and that is the Great Satan, America. As in the past, America will be defeated in Iran, and America's plots will also be defeated in Libya.

America cannot give the necessary protection to its mercenaries. If it could do this, it could have kept the condemned shah, Sadat, Nimeiri, and Marcos in power.

Nations with a slight recognition of America must realize that it is a terrorist government, one that constantly threatens small governments, and always merely displays its power.

[Question] We asked the Secretary of the Tehran Libyan People's Bureau: Since the Libyan government has vigorously condemned the Camp David accords and the American compromise process in the Middle East, in your view is there a relationship between the Middle East compromise process and America's aggression against Libya?

Abdollah Fazel answered: As I said before, America's plan actually includes the entire area, but America's mercenaries still believe that America protects and aligns itself with them. We say that the combative nation of Lebanon has defeated America. The Vietnamese nation taught America an unforgettable lesson. The nations of Iran and Nicaragua have given America continuous defeats. Those nations who support the Palestinian nation and the right of the return and complete liberation of Palestinian soil, taking into consideration American aid to Israel, must not separate these two, because if it had not been for America, Israel would not have come into being. They must thus align themselves with the world's revolutionary forces and avoid the Great Satan, America. The Great Satan will withdraw, and Reagan will fall. As I said before, Reagan and his mercenaries must realize that neither Libya nor any other revolutionary land are stages. For the aggressor, they will be a burning fire.

We asked: What information do you have on recent events?

He said: American aircraft violated Libyan air space, but Libyan air defenses fought back and shot down three of their aircraft. American aircraft attacked a civilian Libyan ship, but, praise God, the damage was insignificant. If America continues its aggression, the peace will be endangered. In our resistance to this aggression, we will attack American and NATO bases, and we will respond to all American aggression against our lands and waters. America's aggression has endangered the security of the airlines and shipping lanes. They have created major dangers to the passage of Arab aircraft to Europe, and naturally this will be followed by a reaction from us. It must also be added that the security of the Mediterranean and its countries faces a serious danger because of America's aggression against our country, the country of the great September revolution.

As a final question, we asked: Do you have a message for the Muslim nation of Iran?

He said: We thank the brother officials and the Muslim nation of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their resistance and steadfastness against the plots of imperialism and Zionism, and for their solidarity with their brothers in Libya. We say to them that the Libyan nation will fight any kind of American aggression. The Libyan nation knows that in the event of continued American aggression it will not be left alone. All revolutionary forces, chief among them the Muslim and

revolutionary nation of Iran under its wise leadership, will certainly be beside the brother and revolutionary nation of Libya. We will all teach America an unforgettable lesson, and this time, as in the past, Reagan will be checked. I assure my brothers in Iran that any kind of American aggression against Libya will be met with a sharp response from the revolutionary Libyan nation.

9310

CSO: 4640/252

IRAN

BRIEFS

RECLAIMABLE LANDS BESTOWED ON OPPRESSED--All unutilized lands which have value as residential property will be distributed without exception next year to qualified oppressed people. This was announced by Engineer Isari, acting director of the Urban Lands Organization at an exclusive interview with KEYHAN's correspondent. He also said: Since the period for developing unutilized lands is over at the end of the current year, after the beginning of the year 1365 [21 Mar 1986 - 20 Mar 1987] under no circumstances will authorization for development and revival of lands be give to landowners who have not obtained documents of ownership for such lands. Concerning the transfer to unutilized lands to the oppressed for the purpose of creating residential units, Engineer Isari said: In 1365 [21 Mar 1986 - 20 Mar 1987] the government intends to divide and distribute all unutilized lands with value as residential property without exception among qualified oppressed people. Concerning the design and construction of small apartments for the purpose of implementing the rental program, he said: In this connection, a set of guidelines has been issued to all central municipal lands offices in order for them to make the necessary lands available to the housing foundation. In the implementation of these guidelines, so far three parcels of land in various parts of the city of Tehran, totaling about 300 housing units, have been turned over to the housing foundation. The acting director of the National Urban Lands Organization also presented a brief report on the chief activities of this organization throughout the country. He said: The Urban Lands Organization has been able so far to allocate, distribute, or deliver about 22 million square meters of land for the construction of housing units to 168,880 families in 22 provinces in 220 urban locations in 174 cities. [Text] [Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 9 Mar 86 p 19] 9310

CSO: 4640/252

PAKISTAN

SHIFT IN BENAZIR'S ATTITUDE TO UNITED STATES WELCOMED

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 31 Mar 86 p 3

[Column 'Siyasat Namah' [Political Talk] by Abdul Karim Abid: "Miss Benazir's Cooperation With the United States; Anti-U.S. Politics Does Not Agree with PPP"]

[Text] Is there a new understanding between the United States and the PPP? Is it true that the United States, as it did in the case of Marcos of the Philippines, has withdrawn its support to all dictators? Is Prime Minister Junejo acceptable to Miss Benazir Bhutto? These and some other questions of this type were raised after Miss Benazir's recent statements and interviews were published. As for her understanding with the United States, the socialist faction of her party has been complaining about "Miss Sahiba's relationship with the United States." This was making things difficult for this faction; however, it did not want to take any premature action. The members of this faction want to strengthen their party at the grassroots level regardless of what Miss Bhutto does at a higher level. They hope to achieve for it an image of a strong left wing party. They have already established some study circles in Punjab and are demanding Party elections. This faction believes that as far as Punjab is concerned, the socialist group will emerge as a force if such elections are held at this time.

Besides this reaction of the socialists over Miss Bhutto's agreement with the United States, the murder of Mr Bhutto's son in France indicates that the KGB is at daggers drawn with the Bhutto family. Miss Bhutto's and Begum Nusrat Bhutto's leaning toward the United States is considered the reason for this animosity. Both ladies, especially Begum Nusrat, disliked her sons' friendship with the Afghans and Russians. They were also scared of Alzulfiqar's activities. These activities were not only dangerous from a political point of view, they also could threaten the lives of several family members. This fear was well-founded and events proved that to befriend the Soviets was to play with fire. Had the Bhutto males been careful in their dealings with the Russians, such a grave situation would not have arisen. However, they played themselves into KGB hands. Babrak Karmel also used them relentlessly and when he realized that the Bhuttos could not be used any further, the Cannes tragedy took place. But the matter did not end there; even Miss Benazir's life was in danger. In an emotional speech given after General Zia came to power Mr Bhutto said he would make 'those generals' clean his bathroom. At that time, I wrote in a column published in the MASHRIQ that the communists

wanted a confrontation between Bhutto and the armed forces and wanted to see this confrontation go to the extreme. I was surprised that a mature politician like Bhutto let emotions rule him and chose to make the army his enemy. This column is still safe in MASHRIQ files and will be published again if necessary.

The communists thought that if there was a confrontation between Bhutto and the armed forces, they would benefit regardless of who won. This did not happen, but the Bhutto family lost its footing. All this proves that the PPP is a democratic type of political party and not a revolutionary group. Its awkward efforts to be a revolutionary party proved stupid.

Miss Benazir knows now that confronting the army was not a smart move. The army and army men should not be involved in politics and the only solution to Pakistan's political problems is implementation of the 1973 constitution in letter and spirit, but only appropriate political action should have been the means to attain this objective. Hijacking airplanes and exploding bombs merely strengthened the military dictatorship and thwarted democracy. There were two kinds of people involved in this violent confrontation: those who were politically naive and foreign agents who wanted an excuse to keep the military government in power.

Both Begum Nusrat and Miss Benazir have learned a lot about politics during the last 7 years. It is for this reason that they emphasize they do not intend to involve in any agitation on returning to Pakistan. They just do not want to do anything that helps bring military government back in power. Miss Benazir was against boycotting recent elections and wanted her party to participate. She hoped that such a participation would result in several PPP members winning seats in various assemblies and fighting for a parliamentary and party system. Unfortunately, both PPP and the MRD boycotted the elections and Mr Junejo was credited with this historical achievement. Everybody, especially the old boy network in the MRD, was angry at this development. Now, however, everyone admits that Mr Junejo's role is very important for these assemblies and democracy itself. Miss Benazir has openly stated that she would not consider Mr Junejo's government a mere forerunner of democracy provided it continues its efforts to bring democratic and civil liberties to people.

The anti-United States sentiment being demonstrated by pro-Soviet faction of the PPP does not fit into Miss Benazir's present politics. She has clearly indicated that good relationship with the United States was very important. She thought it necessary to meet with American officials before returning to Pakistan. She gave two reasons for her visit to the United States. One, she wanted to thank the State Department for helping her obtain release from her long detention. Two, she wanted to present the opposition's viewpoint to U.S. officials to counter [Pakistan's Minister of Finance] Mr Yaseen Wattoo's recent meetings in Washington discussing Pakistani government's views. Miss Benazir welcomed the 4.2 billion dollar U.S. aid to Pakistan and hoped that the U.S. government would be able to use this aid as a lever and pressure Pakistani government into respecting people's democratic and human rights. She added that the U.S. government sided with the people in the Philippines against the Marcos regime and hoped the U.S. will play the same role in Pakistan.

All this indicates that the top leadership of the PPP or the Bhutto family is on good terms with the United States. Both the United States and the PPP now have a soft spot for each other. It is possible that the United States will use new faces if it decides to open a new dialogue on Afghanistan. Some of these new faces are already visible in the Junejo administration. It is conceivable that keeping larger national interests in view, a "national government" will be formed at some point in the future; if it is, the PPP is certain to have a fair share in it. It is obvious that for now Miss Benazir will be satisfied with only a part of the power and will not insist on taking total control.

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PAKISTAN

EDITORIAL BLASTS SUGGESTION TO CHANGE COUNTRY'S NAME

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 29 Mar 86 p 3

[Editorial: "Despicable Proposal"]

[Text] The whole country has reacted negatively toward a PPP leader's suggestion to change the country's name. Various people and groups have condemned this idea. While some people have called it an immature and childish idea and suggested that it be ignored altogether, others have requested the government to take strong action against its proponents. They believe that people of Pakistan must deal with such depraved and wicked persons. We are well aware that the citizens of this country are patriotic, sincere and devoted Muslims. They love this country, the principles it stands for and its name. We are amazed that some people had the nerve to raise slogans for a confederation and for dissolving Pakistan and now want to change the name of the country. Over 100 million Muslims of this subcontinent had accepted this name even before Pakistan came into existence. This very name hit non-Muslims and anti-Pakistan elements like a thunderbolt. Millions of Muslims have sacrificed their lives and properties to protect this great name. Even today, no other name evokes emotions so much as this one. After Islam, 'Pakistan' is the greatest source of unity for the Muslims. Our country perhaps will not be as united as it is now if we change this name. Therefore, it is an understatement to say that this proposal to change the name of our country is childish or silly. Enemies of our country are conspiring against us under a well-conceived plan. First they proposed a confederation and [formed] the Sindh-Baluch-Pakhtoon Front. Later, they tried to incite provincial prejudices. This was followed by slogans demanding dissolution of Pakistan. Now there are efforts to make these slogans part of a regular movement. While all this was happening in our country, Miss Benazir decided to visit the United States. We cannot ignore these events. Unfortunately, Pakistan's rulers and politicians always pay attention to various conspiracies when it is too late and the traitors become too strong. Our country is facing a crisis of the proportions that took place after the 1965 war during the Ayub era. Experienced and sagacious leaders had warned the government of the impending danger, however, Ayub Khan's ministers and their subordinates remained busy in trying to stay in power and protect the Convention League. As a result of this negligence neither Ayub nor the Convention League could survive; what is more, our country was divided into two parts. The present situation is similar whether anyone believes it or not. We cannot stem the tide that is going to engulf us by merely labeling those who raise slogans and hatch conspiracies against Pakistan as traitors and not punish them.

We do recognize that freedom to express political opinion is essential in a democracy. However, the purpose of political and democratic rights is to identify and solve country's problems. These rights are not for working against the nation. We see, however, that some persons are trying to obliterate this country. They are trying to misdirect our countrymen to achieve their own selfserving goals. We are also puzzled by our government's attitude toward such people. They are being treated the same way as patriotic Muslim groups are.

Demands made by Islamic parties are constructive and according to Pakistani ideology. Other parties, however, want to bring socialism and secularism to the country. In other words, they want to divide the country and have already started efforts to achieve this goal. These times of turmoil demand that we implement an Islamic rule immediately. In order to maintain peace, unity and Islamic ideology intact, we must deal with the opponents of Pakistan and its name the same way any other nation with an ideology would deal. If we do not do that, the mischief that has just started will get out of our control, and those in power as well as the whole nation will come to grief.

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PAKISTAN

STRONG ACTION DEMANDED TO BRING LAW, ORDER

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 25 Mar 86 p 3

[Editorial: "When Will There Be Accountability"]

[Text] While addressing the nation on the first Pakistan Day under democracy after 8 1/2 years of martial law, Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo said that a state of lawlessness disruption and anarchy will not be permitted. He had said that special forces had been established to maintain peace in various parts of the country because peace and stability are essential for the nation's progress. We cannot disagree with our prime minister's statement about peace. Be it Pakistan or any other country, progress is impossible if lawlessness, violence and terrorism prevail. Citizens of such a country become so weak from fighting among themselves that any other country can easily vanquish them. Lawlessness is not only dangerous to a country's security but also detrimental to its people's honor and self-image. The strong eat the weak and there is not one to stop this practice. Anarchy takes over with its jungle rules. In situations like these a government has no reason to exit. After all, governments are there to enforce rules and laws in a country, protect the weak from the strong and make sure that evil forces do not take over. During the martial law regime this was called "protection of the veil and four walls." During 8 1/2 years of the martial law regime, all efforts were made to maintain law and order in the country. Even people with valid grievances were not allowed to raise their voices. All terrorists and trouble makers either waited for their chance or went underground to pursue their activities. But this control was only on surface. Because of dictatorship, sycophants, cowards, opportunistists and subversive elements were being protected while patriotic people were being suppressed. In 1983 the martial law regime smothered the premature movement of the MRD and falsely believed itself to be on top of the situation. This disheartened the democratic forces and made the martial law regime even stronger. One deplorable consequence of this action was the involvement of some political parties in anarchy and trouble making. They sought the cooperation of criminal elements to discredit the martial law government. With this help the criminals became bold. They broke into jails and freed robbers and thieves. Terrorists were used to create riots; whenever someone was killed, he was declared a hero. Even those sentenced by the courts to die were treated as martyrs. Religious and political leaders got involved in celebrating the anniversaries of their "martyrdom" and eulogized professional criminals just

to get even with the government or to get attention. When the criminals noticed that they literally could get away with murder, they began to play openly. While we accuse some political parties in providing opportunity to these thieves, robbers, murders and other criminals to act openly, martial law regime is equally to blame for this "good deed."

Since the civilian government took over, Prime Minister Junejo has been emphasizing ending lawlessness and corruption. Curbing graft is one of the goals included in his 5-point program. He announced in his Pakistan Day address that plans to eradicate graft were finalized and will be implemented soon. In fact bribery and graft are also major reasons for disorder and unruliness. All criminals know that they can commit any crime and go free if they bribe the right person. At one time people were scared of martial law regimes. Martial law regimes came and went and we all know the result of the involvement of military officials in civilian affairs. Even General Zia admitted that bribery rates had gone up. Martial law is history now, but we are well aware that law and order situation is at its worst. There are problems cropping up over the country. Lawlessness is rampant from Karachi to Gadoon. In Karachi there have been incidents of fire and arson in the past few days in Lyari area. The latest news is that on Pakistan Day about 50 people armed with Kalashnikov rifles and sten guns attacked the central jail in Sukkur and freed 34 death row inmates. Four persons, including two prisoners, were killed in crossfire. This was the biggest jail break incident in the history of Pakistan. The attackers were very organized and well-armed. They surrounded the prison and used ladders to get inside. Once in, they turned electricity off and went to the death row where criminals sentenced for murder, arson, robbery and dozens of other crimes were confined. The prisoners were taken out of the same way.

This incident illustrates our countries inability to enforce law and order. Robbers are raising hell all over the country, especially in Sind. It is very difficult to catch them. Now, after the recent [Jailbreak] incident, we are not sure if they will receive any sentence even if they are caught. These robbers have the support of big landlords and leaders. What we must do is to arrest these robbers along with their supporters. This, however, does not happen for some reason. Questions are asked time and again as to who supplies food and other necessary things to these robbers when they hide in jungles and who acts as the middle man to pick up ransom money when these criminals abduct people. The Sukkur jailbreak, even if it is only a law and order matter, is a serious incident. But we believe that there is some deeper conspiracy it behind. Such incidents also happen in 1983. There is a lot of political activity in the country, at present and the government is being forced into holding elections. Slogans to dissolve Pakistan are being raised in Sind. Persons who believe politics and terrorism to be synonyms always need criminals to disrupt opponents' meetings and rallies. Under these circumstances, we would like to tell Mr Junejo that this is not the time to discuss the issue of lawlessness but to take firm actions to eradicate it.

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PAKISTAN

CENTER, AKALI GOVERNMENTS CHARGED WITH INCOMPETENCE

New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 31 Mar 86 p 4

[Editorial]

[Text] The prime minister may rest assured that no political party is trying to fish in the troubled waters of Punjab. Their statements are a testimony to this. They have not launched any program which may exacerbate tension between Hindus and Sikhs or impede the administrative work. Following the Ludhiana incident, all parties jointly organized a peaceful strike and it was quite successful in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal and Chandigarh. In Ludhiana, the terrorists deliberately targeted the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [Rss] workers because they had previously failed to ignite communal riots even after killing workers of Shiv Sena and other such reactionary Hindu organizations. Shiv Sena workers surely take out processions in cities of Punjab to express Hindu resentment against police and the Barnala government and Hindu suffering from insecurity join them. But after the Ludhiana incident, the Rashtriya Samsevak Sangh had not done anything anywhere to incite tension. Its sympathisers, the leaders of Bharatiya Janata Party, have organized a strike in Delhi. These leaders have told Barnala to either take a tough action or to leave office. The BJP leaders have also accused the central government of incompetence. But this cannot be described as fishing in troubled waters. Terrorists murdered the aged leader of MACPA (Marxist Communist Party), Ajit Singh. But even this party has not done anything to add fuel to fire. Marxist leaders in fact have been telling the Barnala government for a long time that if it cannot deal with the terrorists, it will not be able to rule. By calling an All Haryana Conference, Lok Dal has admittedly gave a call for protecting the interests of Haryana. But this party has not done anything in Punjab which should stand in the way of effective administrative action or which may heighten tension. If there has been a demand from some circles to suspend Barnala government and impose President's rule, then Punjab Congress also is a party to such a demand. Obviously all the parties are extremely concerned and upset over the situation in Punjab.

Under these circumstances, the prime minister should not waste his time in sermonizing the opposition. With the exception of the Damdami Taksal, Sikh Students Federation, United Akali Dal and Shiv Sena, no group has espoused terrorism. It is Common knowledge that in Punjab, the terrorists are acting not for the Sikhs but for Pakistan and other powers. On the basis of known

evidence, Akalis themselves are stunned that Pakistani agents are engaged in cutting at their roots. Talk to any common Sikh and you will discover that he no longer has the same sympathy for the extremists that he had after operation Blue Star. Nevertheless, it is true that Dāmdamī Taksal and the Sikh Students Federation are today receiving more co-operation from the people than before. It is not the case however that now Sikhs are more convinced of the righteousness of their (i.e., extremists) ways. It is because in this game of the gun, the extremists and terrorists are getting the better of Akali government and people lack the courage to face the terrorists. When the armed and trained Punjab police is demoralized and instead of facing the terrorists, they are trying to save their own skin, how can we expect courage from the masses? As the terrorists appear to be succeeding, the Sikhs of Punjab will be forced to co-operate with them. Terrorists know that they don't have popular support and that is why they are forcing their will on the people by spreading terror. Instead of warning the opposition and giving them sermons on patriotism, let the prime minister first demonstrate in Punjab that the terrorist guns can be silenced by the guns of authority and that peace can be restored there by the rule of law. To deal with the terrorists, police and administration need guts and sense. Once the people, know that police can kill or arrest assassins, their fears will vanish and they will, on their own, come forward to help the administration. What can people expect from a police that is on the run or an administration that is paralyzed.

What is needed is tough and effective action and no political party is standing in its way nor are the people stopping the government from it. On the contrary, they are demanding that the government take control of the situation before it gets completely out of hand. If anyone has been derelict in duty, it is the Barnala government and the central leadership. More than any other political party, Akalis and the Congress have been guided by political gains. In an effort to appease the terrorists and cover up its own dissensions Akali government has never taken a correct and tough stand at the right moment. That is why the terrorists have been so bold that after Anandpur Sahib they committed a massacre in Ludhiana, and in Nakodar the day after. Barnala government has made a laughing stock of its administration and its police. Center has time and again tried to help the Akali government but it is the Akalis who are the soldiers in the trenches. As long as they are not prepared to fight and risk their lives, no efforts of the Center will succeed in improving the situation in Punjab. It is the Akalis who have to take action and it is they who have to refrain from taking political advantage of the situation. That is why the prime minister should first have a talk with the Barnala government and by raising its morale get it ready for action. Akalis are aware that the terrorists are cutting at the roots of their government and their party but they don't have the courage and determination to act even to have their own interests. Akalis will surely sink through their own incompetence, but in the process they will create a huge problem for the country. Only Center can assure the Akali government that even without appeasing the terrorists it can retain the confidence of Punjabis. Rajiv Gandhi can also reassure Bhajan Lal that he need not be afraid of [Haryana opposition leader] Devi Lal and the All Haryana Conference. Silence can be more efficacious. In fact, had Bhajan Lal been suitably guided right from the beginning, the Mathew Commission would not have failed so disastrously. Even now by keeping the situation in Haryana calm he can help Akali government and the Center. The entire country knows that in Punjab there is a danger to national integrity and democracy. Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi and Barnala should first discharge their responsibility and tackle this danger in the way it should be tackled. This is their responsibility

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